BOOK I

CHAPTER I

O Pericles, to me the dearest of friends, I am of opinion that the whole philosophy of Plato was at first unfolded into light through the beneficent will of superior natures, exhibiting the intellect concealed in them, and the truth subsisting together with beings, to souls conversant with generation (so far as it is lawful for them to participate of such supernatural and mighty good); and again, that afterwards having received its perfection, returning as it were into itself, and becoming unapparent to many[†] who professed to philosophize, and who earnestly desired to engage in the investigation of true being, it again advanced into light. But I particularly think that the mystic doctrine respecting divine concerns, which is purely established on a sacred foundation, and which perpetually subsists with the gods themselves, became thence apparent to such as are capable of enjoying it for a time, through one man,[‡] whom I should not err in calling the primary leader and hierophant of those true mysteries, into which souls separated from terrestrial places are initiated, and of those entire and stable visions, which those participate who genuinely embrace a happy and blessed life. But this philosophy shone forth at first from him so venerably and arcanely, as if established in sacred temples, and within their adyta, and being unknown to many who have entered into these holy places, in certain orderly periods of time, proceeded as much as was possible for it into light, through certain true priests, and who embraced a life corresponding to the tradition of such mystic concerns. It appears likewise to me, that the whole place became splendid, and that illuminations of divine spectacles every where presented themselves to the view.

These interpreters of the *epopteia* (or mystic speculations) of Plato, who have unfolded to us all-sacred narrations of divine concerns, and who were allotted a nature similar to their leader, I should determine to

[†] It is a remarkable historical fact, as I have observed in my *History of the Restoration of the Platonic Theology* [TTS vol. VII], that the philosophy of Plato was in a manner lost for many centuries after the death of its great master. For its depths were not penetrated prior to Plotinus, who lived about two hundred and fifty years after the birth of Christ.

[‡] Meaning Plato.

be the Egyptian Plotinus, and those who received the theory from him, I mean Amelius and Porphyry, together with those in the third place who were produced like virile statues from these, *viz.*: Iamblichus and Theodorus,† and any others, who after these, following this divine choir, have energized about the doctrines of Plato with a divinely-inspired mind. From these, he‡ who, after the gods, has been our leader to everything beautiful and good, receiving in an undefiled manner the most genuine and pure light of truth in the bosom of his soul, made us a partaker of all the rest of Plato's philosophy, communicated to us that arcane information which he had received from those more ancient than himself, and caused us, in conjunction with him, to be divinely agitated about the mystic truth of divine concerns.

To this man, therefore, should we undertake to return thanks adequate to the benefits which we have received from him; the whole of time would not be sufficient. But if it is necessary, not only§ that we should have received from others the transcendant good of the Platonic philosophy, but that we should leave to posterity monuments of those blessed spectacles of which we have been spectators, and emulators to the utmost of our ability, under a leader the most perfect of the present time, and who arrived at the summit of philosophy; perhaps we shall act properly in invoking the gods, that they will enkindle the light of truth in our soul, and in supplicating the attendants and ministers of better natures to direct our intellect and lead it to the all-perfect, divine, and elevated, end of the Platonic theory. For I think that every where he who participates in the least degree of intelligence, will begin his undertakings from the Gods, and especially in explications respecting the Gods: for we can no otherwise be able to understand a divine nature than by being perfected through the light of the Gods; nor divulge it to others unless governed by them, and exempt from multiform opinions, and the variety which subsists in words, preserving at the same time the interpretation of divine names. Knowing therefore this, and complying with the exhortation of the Platonic *Timæus*, we in the first place establish the Gods as leaders of the doctrine respecting themselves. But

† Both these philosophers were the disciples of Porphyry. For an account of the former, of whom the Emperor Julian says, that he was posterior indeed in time to Plato, but not in genius, see my *History of the Restoration of the Platonic Theology* [TTS vol. VII].

‡ Meaning his preceptor Syrianus.

§ The word *μονον* is omitted in the original.

may they in consequence of hearing our prayers be propitious to us, and benignantly approaching, guide the intellect of our soul, and lead it about the Vesta of Plato, and to the arduous sublimities of this speculation; where, when arrived, we shall receive all the truth concerning them, and shall obtain the best end of our parturient conceptions of divine concerns, desiring to know something respecting them, inquiring about them of others, and, at the same time, as far as we are able, exploring them ourselves.

CHAPTER II

And thus much by way of preface. But it is necessary that I should unfold the mode of the proposed doctrine, what it is requisite to expect it will be, and define the preparatives which a hearer of it ought to possess; that being properly adapted, he may approach, not to our discourses, but to the intellectually-elevated and deific philosophy of Plato. For it is proper that convenient aptitudes of auditors should be proposed according to the forms of discourses, just as in the mysteries, those who are skilful in concerns of this kind, previously prepare receptacles for the Gods, and neither always use the same inanimate particulars, nor other animals, nor men, in order to procure the presence of the divinities; but that alone out of each of these which is naturally capable of participating divine illumination, is by them introduced to the proposed mystic rites.

The present discourse, therefore, will first of all be divided by me into three parts. In the beginning, considering all those common conceptions concerning the Gods, which Plato summarily delivers, together with the power and dignity every where of theological axioms; but in the middle of this work, speculating the total orders of the Gods, enumerating their peculiarities, defining their progressions after the manner of Plato, and referring every thing to the hypotheses of theologists; and, in the end, speaking concerning the Gods which are in different places celebrated in the Platonic writings, whether they are supermundane or mundane, and referring the theory respecting them to the total genera of the divine orders.

In every part of this work, likewise, we shall prefer the clear, distinct, and simple, to the contraries of these. And such things as are delivered through symbols, we shall transfer to a clear doctrine concerning them; but such as are delivered through images, we shall transmit to their exemplars. Such things too as are written in a more affirmative way, we shall examine by causal reasonings; but such as are composed through

demonstrations, we shall investigate; and besides this, explain the mode of truth which they contain, and render it known to the hearers. And of things enigmatically proposed, we shall elsewhere discover perspicuity, not from foreign hypotheses, but from the most genuine writings of Plato. But with respect to the things which immediately occur to the hearers, of these we shall contemplate the consent with things themselves. And from all these particulars, one perfect form of the Platonic theology will present itself to our view, together with its truth which pervades through the whole of divine intellections, and the one intellect which generated all the beauty of this theology, and the mystic evolution of this theory. Such, therefore, as I have said, will be my present treatise.

But the auditor of the proposed dogmas is supposed to be adorned with the moral virtues, and to be one who has bound by the reason of virtue all the illiberal and inharmonious motions of the soul, and harmonized them to the one form of intellectual prudence: for, as Socrates says, it is not lawful for the pure to be touched by the impure. But every vicious man is perfectly impure; and the contrary character is pure. He must likewise have been exercised in all the logical methods, and have contemplated many irreprehensible conceptions about analyses, and many about divisions, the contraries to these, agreeably, as it appears to me, to the exhortation of Parmenides to Socrates. For prior to such a contest in arguments, the knowledge of the divine genera, and of the truth established in them, is difficult and impervious. But in the third place, he must not be unskilled in physics. For he who has been conversant with the multiform opinions of physiologists, and has after a manner explored in images the causes of beings, will more easily advance to the nature of separate and primary essences. An auditor therefore of the present work, as I have said, must not be ignorant of the truth contained in the phenomena, nor unacquainted with the paths of erudition, and the disciplines which they contain; for through these we obtain a more immaterial knowledge of a divine essence. But all these must be bound together in the leader intellect. Being likewise a partaker of the dialectic of Plato,[1] meditating those immaterial energies which are separate from corporeal powers, and desiring to contemplate by intelligence[†] in conjunction with reason [true] beings, our auditor must genuinely apply himself to the interpretation of divine and blessed dogmas, and fill his soul, according to the Oracle, with profound love;

[†] Instead of νοησις μετα λογου, it is necessary to read, νοησει μετα λογου.

since, as Plato somewhere observes, for the apprehension of this theory, a better assistant than love cannot be obtained.

He must likewise be exercised in the truth which pervades through all things, and must excite his intelligible eye to real and perfect truth. He must establish himself in a firm, immovable, and safe kind of divine knowledge, and must be persuaded not to admire any thing else, nor even to direct his attention to other things, but must hasten to divine light with an intrepid reasoning energy, and with the power of an unwearied life; and in short, must propose to himself such a kind of energy and rest as it becomes him to possess who intends to be such a coryphæus as Socrates describes in the *Theætetus*. Such then is the magnitude of our hypothesis, and such the mode of the discourses about it. Before, however, I enter on the narration of the things proposed, I wish to speak about theology itself, its different modes, and what theological forms Plato approves, and what he rejects; that these being previously known, we may more easily learn in what follows, the auxiliaries of the demonstrations themselves.

CHAPTER III

All, therefore, that have ever touched upon theology, have called things first, according to nature, Gods; and have said that the theological science is conversant about these. And some, indeed, have considered a corporeal essence, as that alone which has any existence, and have placed in a secondary rank with respect to essence, all the genera of incorporeal natures, considering the principles of things as having a corporeal form, and evincing that the habit in us by which we know these, is corporeal. But others, suspending indeed all bodies from incorporeal natures, and defining the first hyparxis[†] to be in soul, and the powers of soul, call (as it appears to me) the best of souls, Gods; and denominate the science which proceeds as far as to these, and which knows these, theology. But such as produce the multitude of souls from another more ancient principle, and establish intellect as the leader of wholes, these assert that the best end is a union of the soul with intellect, and consider the intellectual form of life as the most honourable of all things. They doubtless too consider theology, and the discussion of intellectual essence, as one and the same. All these, therefore, as I have said, call the first and most self-sufficient principles of things, Gods, and the science respecting these, theology.

[†] Hyparxis, is the summit of any nature, or blossom, as it were, of its essence.

The divine narration however, of Plato alone, despises all corporeal natures with reference to principles. Because, indeed, ever thing divisible and endued with interval, is naturally unable either to produce or preserve itself, but possesses its being, energy and passivity through soul, and the motions which soul contains. But Plato demonstrates that the psychical essence [*ie.* the essence pertaining to soul] is more ancient than bodies, but is suspended from an intellectual hypostasis. For every thing which is moved according to time, though it may be self-moved, is indeed of a more ruling nature than things moved by others, but is posterior to an eternal motion. He shows, therefore, as we have said, that intellect is the father and cause of bodies and souls, and that all things both subsist and energize about it, which are allotted a life conversant with transitions and evolutions.

Plato, however, proceeds to another principle entirely exempt from intellect, more incorporeal and ineffable, and from which all things, even though you should speak of such as are last, have necessarily a subsistence. For all things are not naturally disposed to participate of soul, but such things only as are allotted in themselves a more clear or obscure life. Nor are all things able to enjoy intellect and being, but such only as subsist according to form. But it is necessary that the principle of all things should be participated by all things, if it does not desert any thing, since it is the cause of all things which in any respect are said to have a subsistence. Plato having divinely discovered this first principle of wholes, which is more excellent than intellect, and is concealed in inaccessible recesses; and having exhibited these three causes and monads, and evinced them to be above bodies, I mean soul, the first intellect, and a union above intellect, produces from these as monads, their proper numbers; one multitude indeed being uniform,† but the second intellectual, and the third psychical. For every monad is the leader of a multitude co-ordinate to itself. But as Plato connects bodies with souls, so likewise he connects souls with intellectual forms, and these again with the unities of beings. But he converts all things to one imparticipable unity. And having run back as far as to this unity, he considers himself as having obtained the highest end of the theory of wholes; and that this is the truth respecting the Gods, which is conversant with the unities of beings, and which delivers their

† Wherever this word occurs in this translation, it signifies that which is characterised by unity.

progressions and peculiarities, the contact of beings with them, and the orders of forms which are suspended from these unical[†] hypostases.

But he teaches us that the theory respecting intellect, and the forms and the genera revolving about intellect, is posterior to the science which is conversant with the Gods themselves. Likewise that the intellectual theory apprehends intelligibles, and the forms which are capable of being known by the soul through the projecting energy of intellect; but that the theological science transcending this, is conversant with arcane and ineffable hyparxes, and pursues their separation from each other, and their unfolding into light from one cause of all: whence, I am of opinion, that the intellectual peculiarity of the soul is capable of apprehending intellectual forms, and the difference which subsists in them, but that the summit, and, as they say, flower of intellect and hyparxis, is conjoined with the unities of beings, and through these, with the occult union of all the divine unities. For as we contain many gnostic powers, through this alone we are naturally capable of being conjoined with and participating this occult union. For the genus of the Gods cannot be apprehended by sense, because it is exempt from all bodies; nor by opinion and dianoia,[‡] for these are divisible and come into contact with multiform concerns; nor by intelligence in conjunction with reason, for knowledge of this kind belongs to true beings; but the hyparxis of the Gods rides on beings, and is defined according to the union itself of wholes. It remains, therefore, if it be admitted that a divine nature can be in any respect known, that it must be apprehended by the hyparxis of the soul, and through this, as far as it is possible, be known. For we say that every where things similar can known by the similar; *viz.* the sensible by sense, the doxastic[§] by opinion, the dianoetic by dianoia, and the intelligible by intellect. So that the most unical nature must be known by *The One*, and the ineffable by that which is ineffable.

Indeed, Socrates in the *[First] Alcibiades* rightly observes, that the soul entering into herself will behold all other things, and deity itself. For verging to her own union, and to the centre of all life, laying aside multitude, and the variety of the all manifold powers which she

[†] *ie.* Of the nature of *The One*.

[‡] *i.e.* The discursive energy of reason, or the power of the soul that reasons scientifically.

[§] *i.e.* The object of opinion.

contains, she ascends to the highest watch-tower of beings. And as in the most holy of the mysteries, they say, that the mystics at first meet with the multiform, and many-shaped† genera; which are hurled forth before the Gods, but on entering the interior parts of the temple, unmoved, and guarded by the mystic rites, they genuinely receive in their bosom divine illumination, and divested of their garments, as they would say, participate of a divine nature; - the same mode, as it appears to me, takes place in the speculation of wholes. For the soul when looking at things posterior to herself, beholds the shadows and images of beings, but when she converts herself to herself she evolves her own essence, and the reasons which she contains. And at first indeed, she only as it were beholds herself; but, when she penetrates more profoundly into the knowledge of herself, she finds in herself both intellect, and the orders of beings. When however, she proceeds into her interior recesses, and into the adytum as it were of the soul, she perceives with her eye closed, the genus of the Gods, and the unities of beings. For all things are in us psychically, and through this we are naturally capable of knowing all things, by exciting the powers and the images of wholes which we contain.

And this is the best employment of our energy, to be extended to a divine nature itself, having our powers at rest, to revolve harmoniously round it, to excite all the multitude of the soul to this union, and laying aside all such things as are posterior to *The One*, to become seated and conjoined with that which is ineffable, and beyond all things. For it is lawful for the soul to ascend, till she terminates her flight in the principle of things; but arriving thither, beholding the place which is there, descending thence, and directing her course through beings; likewise, evolving the multitude of forms, exploring their monads and their numbers, and apprehending intellectually how each is suspended from its proper unity, then we may consider her as possessing the most perfect science of divine natures, perceiving in a uniform manner the progressions of the Gods into beings, and the distinctions of beings about the Gods. Such then according to Plato's decision is our theologist; and theology is a habit of this kind, which unfolds the hyparxis itself of the Gods, separates and speculates their unknown and unical light from the peculiarity of their participants, and, announces it to such as are worthy of this energy, which is both blessed and comprehends all things at once.

† *i.e.* Evil dæmons.

CHAPTER IV

After this all-perfect comprehension of the first theory, we must deliver the modes according to which Plato teaches us mystic conceptions of divine natures. For he appears not to have pursued every where the same mode of doctrine about these; but sometimes according to a deific energy, and at other times dialectically, he evolves the truth concerning them. And sometimes he symbolically announces their ineffable peculiarities, but at other times he recurs to them from images, and discovers in them the primary causes of wholes. For in the *Phædrus* being inspired by the Nymphs, and having exchanged human intelligence for a better possession, fury, he unfolds with a divine mouth many arcane dogmas concerning the intellectual Gods, and many concerning the liberated rulers of the universe, who lead upwards the multitude of mundane Gods to the monads which are intelligible and separate from [mundane] wholes. But relating still more about those Gods who are allotted the world, he celebrates their intellections, and mundane fabrications, their unpolluted providence and government of souls, and whatever else Socrates delivers entheastically [or according to a divinely-inspired energy] in that dialogue, as he clearly asserts, ascribing at the same time this fury to the deities of the place.

But in the *Sophista*, dialectically contending about being, and the separate hypostasis of *The One* from beings, and doubting against those more ancient than himself, he shows how all beings are suspended from their cause, and the first being, but that being itself participates of the unity which is exempt from the whole of things, that it is a passive one, but not *The One* itself, being subject to and united to *The One*, but not being that which is primarily one. In a similar manner too, in the *Parmenides*, he unfolds dialectically the progressions of being from *The One*, and the transcendency of *The One*, through the first hypotheses, and this as he asserts in that dialogue, according to the most perfect division of this method. And again, in the *Gorgias*, he relates the fable concerning the three demiurgi [or fabricators] and their demiurgic allotment, which indeed is not only a fable, but a true narration. But in the *Banquet*, he speaks concerning the union of Love. And in the *Protagoras*, about the distribution of mortal animals from the Gods; in a symbolical manner concealing the truth respecting divine natures, and as far as to mere indication unfolding his mind to the most genuine of his hearers.

If likewise, you are willing that I should mention the doctrine delivered through the mathematical disciplines, and the discussion of

divine concerns from ethical or physical discourses, of which many may be contemplated in the *Timæus*, many in the dialogue called the *Politicus*, and many may be seen scattered in other dialogues; here likewise to you who are desirous of knowing divine concerns through images, the method will be apparent. For all these shadow forth the powers of things divine. The *Politicus*, for instance, the fabrication in the heavens. But the figures of the five elements delivered in geometrical proportions in the *Timæus*,† represent in images the peculiarities of the Gods who ride on the parts of the universe. And the divisions of the psychical essence in that dialogue shadow forth the total orders of the Gods.

I omit to mention that Plato composes polities, assimilating them to divine natures, and to the whole world, and adorns them from the powers which it contains. All these therefore, through the similitude of mortal to divine concerns, exhibit to us in images, the progressions, orders, and fabrications of divine natures. And such are the modes of theologic doctrine employed by Plato.

It is evident however, from what has been already said, that they are necessarily so many in number. For those who treat of divine concerns in an indicative manner, either speak symbolically and fabulously, or through images. But of those who openly announce their conceptions, some frame their discourses according to science, but others according to inspiration from the Gods. And he who desires to signify divine concerns through symbols is Orphic, and in short, accords with those who write fables concerning the Gods. But he who does this through images is Pythagoric. For the mathematical disciplines were invented by the Pythagoreans, in order to a reminiscence of divine concerns, at which, through these as images they endeavour to arrive. For they refer both numbers and figures to the Gods, according to the testimony of their historians. But the entheastic character, or he who is under the influence of divine inspiration, unfolding the truth itself by itself concerning the Gods, most perspicuously ranks among the highest initiators. For these do not think proper to unfold the divine orders, or their peculiarities to their familiars, through certain veils, but announce their powers and their numbers, in consequence of being moved by the Gods themselves. But the tradition of divine concerns according to science, is the illustrious prerogative of the philosophy of Plato. For Plato alone, as it appears to me, of all those who are known to us, has attempted methodically to divide and reduce into order, the regular

† εν τιμαιῳ is omitted in the Greek.

progression of the divine genera, their mutual difference, the common peculiarities of the total orders, and the distributed peculiarities in each. But the truth of this will be evident when we frame precedaneous demonstrations about the *Parmenides*, and all the divisions which it contains.

At present we shall observe that Plato does not admit all the fabulous figments of dramatic composition, but those only which have reference to the beautiful and the good, and which are not discordant with a divine essence. For that mythological mode which indicates divine concerns through conjecture is ancient, concealing truth under a multitude of veils, and proceeding in a manner similar to nature, which extends sensible figments of intelligibles, material, of immaterial, partible, of impartible natures and images, and things which have a false being, of things perfectly true. But Plato rejects the more tragical mode of mythologizing of the ancient poets, who thought proper to establish an arcane theology respecting the Gods, and on this account devised wanderings, sections, battles, lacerations, rapes and adulteries of the Gods,† and many other such symbols of the truth about divine natures, which this theology conceals; this mode he rejects, and asserts that it is in every respect most foreign from erudition. But he considers those mythological discourses about the Gods, as more persuasive, and more adapted to truth and the philosophic habit, which assert that a divine nature is the cause of all good, but of no evil, and that it is void of all mutation, ever preserving its own order immutable, and comprehending in itself the fountain of truth, but never becoming the cause of any deception to others. For such types of theology, Socrates delivers in the *Republic*.

All the fables therefore of Plato, guarding the truth in concealment, have not even their externally apparent apparatus discordant with our undisciplined and unperverted anticipation respecting the Gods. But they bring with them an image of the mundane composition, in which both the apparent beauty is worthy of divinity, and a beauty more divine than this, is established in the unapparent lives and powers of the Gods. This therefore, is one of the mythological modes respecting divine concerns, which from the apparently unlawful, irrational, and inordinate, passes into order and bound, and regards as its scope the composition of the beautiful and good.

† See the fables in which these things are asserted of the Gods admirably unfolded by Proclus in the Introduction to the second and third books of the *Republic* of Plato, in Vol. I of my Plato. [TTS vol. IX.]

But there is another mode which he delivers in the *Phædrus*. And this consists in every where preserving theological fables, unmixed with physical narrations, and being careful in no respect to confound or exchange theology, and the physical theory with each other. For, as a divine essence is separate from the whole of nature, in like manner, it is perfectly proper that discourses respecting the Gods should be pure from physical disquisitions. For a mixture of this kind is, says he, laborious: and to make physical passions the end of mythological conjecture, is the employment of no very good man; such for instance, as considering through his [pretended] wisdom, Chimæra, Gorgon, and things of a similar kind, as the same with physical figments. Socrates, in the *Phædrus*, reprobating this mode of mythologizing, represents its patrons as saying under the figure of a fable, that Orithya sporting with the wind Boreas and being thrown down the rocks, means nothing more, than that Orithya who was a mortal, was ravished by Boreas through love. For it appears to me, that fabulous narrations about the gods, should always have their concealed meaning more venerable than the apparent. So that if certain persons introduce to us physical hypotheses of Platonic fables, and such as are conversant with sublunary affairs, we must say that they entirely wander from the intention of the philosopher, and that those hypotheses alone, are interpreters of the truth contained in these fables, which have for their scope, a divine, immaterial, and separate hypostasis, and which looking to this, make the compositions and analyses of the fables, adapted† to our inherent anticipations of divine concerns.

CHAPTER V

As we have therefore enumerated all these modes of the Platonic theology, and have shown what compositions and analyses of fable are adapted to the truth respecting the Gods, let us consider, in the next place, whence, and from what dialogues principally, we think the dogmas of Plato concerning the Gods may be collected, and by a speculation of what types or forms we may be able to distinguish his genuine writings, from those spurious compositions which are ascribed to him.

The truth then concerning the Gods pervades, as I may say, through all the Platonic dialogues, and in all of them conceptions of the first philosophy, venerable, clear, and supernatural, are disseminated, in some

† For οικειαις, it is necessary to read οικειας.

indeed, more obscurely, but in others more conspicuously; conceptions which excite those that are in any respect able to participate of them, to the immaterial and separate essence of the Gods. And, as in each part of the universe, and in nature herself, the demiurgus of all that the world contains, established resemblances of the unknown hyparxis of the Gods, that all things might be converted to a divine nature, through their alliance with it, in like manner I am of opinion, that the divine intellect of Plato weaves conceptions about the Gods in all his writings, and leaves nothing deprived of the mention of divinity, that from the whole of them, a reminiscence of wholes may be obtained, and imparted to the genuine lovers of divine concerns.

If however, it be requisite to lay before the reader those dialogues out of many, which principally unfold to us the mystic discipline about the gods, I should not err in ranking among this number, the *Phædo* and the *Phædrus*, the *Banquet*, and the *Philebus*, and together with these, the *Sophista* and *Politicus*, the *Cratylus* and the *Timæus*. For all these are full through the whole of themselves, as I may say, of the divine science of Plato. But I should place in the second rank after these, the fable in the *Gorgias*, and that in the *Protagoras*; likewise the assertions about the providence of the Gods in the *Laws* and, such things as are delivered about the Fates, or the mother of the Fates, or the circulations of the universe in the tenth book of the *Republic*. Again, you may, if you please, place in the third rank those Epistles, through which we may be able to arrive at the science about divine natures. For in these, mention is made of the three kings; and very many other divine dogmas worthy of the Platonic theory are delivered. It is necessary therefore, looking to these, to explore in these each order of the Gods.

Thus from the *Philebus*, we may receive the science respecting the one good, and the two first principles of things, together with the triad[†] which is unfolded into light from these. For you will find all these distinctly delivered to us by Plato in that dialogue. But from the *Timæus*, you may obtain the theory about intelligibles, a divine narration about the demiurgic monad: and the most full truth about the mundane Gods. But from the *Phædrus*, [you may acquire a scientific knowledge of] all the intelligible and intellectual genera, and of the liberated orders of Gods, which are proximately established above the celestial circulations. From the *Politicus*, you may obtain the theory of the fabrication in the heavens, of the uneven periods of the universe, and the intellectual causes of those periods. But from the *Sophista*, the whole

[†] τριαδος is omitted in the original.

sublunary generation, and the peculiarity of the Gods who are allotted the sublunary region, and preside over its generations and corruptions. But with respect to each of the Gods, we may obtain many conceptions adapted to sacred concerns from the *Banquet*, many from the *Cratylus*, and many from the *Phædo*. For in each of these dialogues, more or less mention is made of divine names, from which it is easy for those who are exercised in divine concerns to discover by a reasoning process the peculiarities of each.

It is necessary however, to evince that each of the dogmas accords with Platonic principles, and the mystic traditions of theologists. For all the Grecian theology is the progeny of the mystic tradition of Orpheus; Pythagoras first of all learning from Aglaophemus the orgies of the Gods, but Plato in the second place receiving an all-perfect science of the divinities from the Pythagoric and Orphic writings. For in the *Philebus* referring the theory about the two species of principles [bound and infinity] to the Pythagoreans, he calls them men dwelling with the Gods, and truly blessed. Philolaus therefore, the Pythagorean, has left us in writing many admirable conceptions about these principles, celebrating their common progression into beings, and their separate fabrication of things. But in the *Timæus*, Plato endeavouring to teach us about the sublunary Gods, and their order, flies to theologists, calls them the sons of the Gods, and makes them the fathers of the truth about those divinities. And lastly, he delivers the orders of the sublunary Gods proceeding from wholes, according to the progression delivered by them of the intellectual kings. Again, in the *Cratylus* he follows the traditions of theologists, respecting the order of the divine processions. But in the *Gorgias*, he adopts the Homeric dogma, respecting the triadic hypostasis of the demiurgi. And in short, he every where discourses concerning the Gods agreeably to the principles of theologists; rejecting indeed, the tragical part of mythological fiction, but establishing first hypotheses in common with the authors of fables.

CHAPTER VI

Perhaps, however, some one may here object to us, that we do not in a proper manner exhibit the every where dispersed theology of Plato, and that we endeavour to heap together different particulars from different dialogues, as if we were studious of collecting together many things into one mixture, instead of deriving them all from one and the same fountain. For if this were the case, we might refer different dogmas to different treatises of Plato, but we shall by no means have a

precedaneous doctrine concerning the Gods, nor will there be any dialogue which presents us with an all-perfect and entire procession of the divine genera, and their co-ordination with each other. But we shall be similar to those who endeavour to obtain a whole from parts, through the want of a whole prior to parts, and to weave together the perfect from things imperfect; when, on the contrary, the imperfect ought to have the first cause of its generation in the perfect. For the *Timæus*, for instance, will teach us the theory of the intelligible genera; and the *Phædrus* appears to present us with a methodical account of the first intellectual orders. But where will be the co-ordination of intellectuals to intelligibles? And what will be the generation of second from first natures? In short, after what manner the progression of the divine orders takes place from the one principle of all things, and how in the generations of the Gods, the orders between *The One*, and all-perfect number, are filled up, we shall be unable to evince.

Farther still, it may be said, where will be the venerableness of your boasted science about divine natures? For it is absurd to call these dogmas which are collected from many places, Platonic; and which, as you acknowledge, are introduced from foreign names to the philosophy of Plato; nor are you able to evince one whole entire truth about divine natures. Perhaps, indeed, they will say, certain persons, junior to Plato, have delivered in their writings, and left to their disciples, one perfect form of theology. You, therefore, are able to produce one entire theory about nature from the *Timæus*; but from the *Republic*, or *Laws*, the most beautiful dogmas about manners, and which tend to one form of philosophy. Alone, therefore, neglecting the treatise of Plato, which contains all the good of the first philosophy, and which may be called the summit of the whole theory, you will be deprived of the most perfect knowledge of beings, unless you are so much infatuated, as to boast on account of fabulous fictions, though an analysis of things of this kind abounds with much of the probable, but not of the demonstrative. Besides, things of this kind are only delivered adventitiously in the Platonic dialogues; as the fable in the *Protagoras*, which is inserted for the sake of the politic science, and the demonstrations respecting it. In like manner, the fable in the *Republic* is inserted for the sake of justice; but in the *Gorgias*, for the sake of temperance. For Plato combines fabulous narrations with investigations of ethical dogmas, not for the sake of the fables, but for the sake of the leading design, that we may not only exercise the intellectual part of the soul, through contending reasons, but that the divine part of the soul may more perfectly receive the knowledge of beings, through its

sympathy with more mystic concerns. For, from other discourses, we appear similar to those who are compelled to the reception of truth; but from fables we suffer in an ineffable manner, and call forth our unperverted conceptions, venerating the mystic information which they contain.

Hence, as it appears to me, Timæus with great propriety thinks it fit that we should produce the divine genera, following the inventors of fables as the sons of the Gods,† and subscribe to their always generating secondary natures from such as are first, though they should speak without demonstration. For this kind of discourse is not demonstrative, but entheastic, and was invented by the ancients, not through necessity, but for the sake of persuasion, not regarding mere discipline, but sympathy with things themselves. But if you are willing to speculate not only the causes of fables, but of other theological dogmas, you will find that some of them are scattered in the Platonic dialogues for the sake of ethical,‡ and others or the sake of physical considerations. For in the *Philebus*, Plato discourses concerning bound and the infinite, for the sake of pleasure and a life according to intellect. For I think the latter are species of the former. In the *Timæus*, the discourse about the intelligible Gods, is assumed for the sake of the proposed physiology. On which account it is every where necessary that images should be known from paradigms; but that the paradigms of material things should be immaterial, of sensibles, intelligible, and that the paradigms of physical forms should be separate.

But again in the *Phædrus*, Plato celebrates the supercelestial place, the subcelestial profundity, and every genus under this, for the sake of amatory mania: the manner in which the reminiscence of souls takes place, and the passage to these from hence. But every where, as I may say, the leading end is either physical or political, while the conceptions about divine natures take place, either for the sake of invention or perfection. How, therefore, can such a theory as yours be any longer venerable and supernatural, and worthy to be studied beyond every thing, when it is neither able to evince the whole in itself, nor the perfect, nor that which is precedaneous in the writings of Plato, but is destitute of all these, is violent and not spontaneous, and does not possess a genuine, but an adventitious order, as in a drama? And such are the objections which may be urged against our design.

† *των θεων* is omitted in the original.

‡ For *μυθικων*, it is necessary to read, *τα μεν ηθικων*.

CHAPTER VII

I, however, to an objection of this kind, shall make a just and perspicuous reply. I say then, that Plato every where discourses about the Gods agreeably to ancient rumour, and to the nature of things. And sometimes indeed, for the sake of the cause of the things proposed, he reduces them to the principles of the dogmas; and thence, as from a watch tower, contemplates the nature of the thing proposed. But sometimes he establishes the theological science as the leading end. For in the *Phædrus* his subject respects intelligible beauty, and the participation of beauty pervading from thence through all things; and in the *Banquet* it respects the amatory order.

But if it be necessary to survey in one Platonic dialogue, the all-perfect, whole, and connected, extending as far as to the compleat number of theology, I shall perhaps assert a paradox, and which will alone be apparent to our familiars. We ought however to dare, since we have entered on such like arguments, and affirm against our opponents, that the *Parmenides*, and the mystic conceptions it contains, will accomplish all you desire. For in this dialogue all the divine genera proceed in order from the first cause, and evince their mutual connexion and dependence on each other. And those which are highest indeed, connate with *The One*, and of a primary nature, are allotted a unical, occult, and simple form of hyparxis; but such as are last, are multiplied, are distributed into many parts, and are exuberant in number, but inferior in power to such as are of a higher order; and such as are middle, according to a convenient proportion, are more composite than their causes, but more simple than their proper progeny. And in short, all the axioms of the theologic science, appear in perfection in this dialogue, and all the divine orders are exhibited subsisting in connexion. So that this is nothing else than the celebrated generation of the Gods, and the procession of every kind of being from the ineffable and unknown cause of wholes. The *Parmenides*, therefore, enkindles in the lovers of Plato, the whole and perfect light of the theological science. But after this, the before mentioned dialogues distribute parts of the mystic discipline about the Gods, and all of them, as I may say, participate of divine wisdom, and excite our spontaneous conceptions respecting a divine nature. And it is necessary to refer all the parts of this mystic discipline to these dialogues, and these again to the one and all-perfect theory of the *Parmenides*. For thus, as it appears to me, we shall suspend the more imperfect from the perfect, and parts from wholes, and shall exhibit reasons assimilated to things, of which, according to the Platonic

Timæus, they are interpreters. Such then is our answer to the objection which may be urged against us; and thus we refer the Platonic theory to the *Parmenides*; just as the *Timæus* is acknowledged by all who are in the least degree intelligent, to contain the whole science about nature.

CHAPTER VIII

I appear, however, by these means, to have excited for myself a twofold contest against those who attempt to investigate the writings of Plato; and I see two sorts of persons, who will oppose what has been said. One of these does not think proper to explore any other design in the *Parmenides*, than exercise through opposite arguments, or to introduce in this dialogue a crowd of arcane and intellectual dogmas, which are foreign from its intention. But the other sort, who are more venerable than these, and lovers of forms assert, that one of the hypotheses is about the first God, another about the second God, and the whole of an intellectual nature, and a third, about the natures posterior to this, whether they are the more excellent genera, or souls, or any other kind of beings. For the investigation of these particulars does not pertain to the present discourse.

These, therefore, distribute three of the hypotheses after this manner. But they do not think proper to busy themselves about the multitude of Gods, the intelligible, and the intellectual genera, the supermundane and mundane natures, or to unfold all these by division, or busily explore them. For according to them, though Plato in the second hypothesis, treats about intellectual beings, yet the nature of intellect is one, simple, and indivisible. Against both these therefore, must he contend, who entertains that opinion of the *Parmenides*, which we have before mentioned. The contest however against these is not equal. But those who make the *Parmenides* a logical exercise, are again attacked by those who embrace the divine mode of interpretation. And those who do not unfold the multitude of beings, and the orders of divine natures, are indeed, as Homer says, in every respect venerable and skilful men, but yet for the sake of the Platonic philosophy, we must doubt against them, following in this our leader to the most holy and mystic truth. It is proper likewise to relate as far as contributes to our purpose, what appears to us to be the truth respecting the hypotheses of the *Parmenides*; for thus perhaps by a reasoning process, we may embrace the whole theology of Plato.

CHAPTER IX

In the first place then, let us consider those, who draw down the design of this dialogue from the truth of things to a logical exercise, and see whether they can possibly accord with the writings of Plato. It is therefore evident to every one, that Parmenides proposes to himself to deliver in reality the dialectic method, and that with this view he cursorily assumes it in a similar manner in each of the things which have a real being, as, in sameness, difference, similitude, dissimilitude, motion, and permanency, etc.; exhorting at the same time, those who desire to discover the nature of each of these in an orderly method, to this exercise, as to a great contest. He likewise asserts that it was by no means an easy undertaking to him who was so much advanced in years, assimilates himself to the Ibycean horse, and presents us with every argument to prove that this method is a serious undertaking, and not a contest consisting in mere words. How therefore, is it possible, that we can refer to empty arguments those conceptions† about which the great Parmenides, evincing that they require much serious discussion, composed this discourse? How likewise is it reasonable to suppose that an aged man would busy himself with mere verbal contests, and that he who loved to speculate the truth of things, would bestow so much study on this method, - he who considered every thing else, as having no real existence, and who ascended to the high watch-tower of being itself? Indeed, he who admits this must suppose that Parmenides is satirized by Plato in this dialogue, by thus representing him drawn down to juvenile contests, from the most intellectual visions of the soul.

But if you are willing, let us consider in addition to the above, what Parmenides promises, and on what subject engaging to speak, he entered on this discussion. Was it not then about being according to his doctrine, and the unity of all beings, to which extending himself, his design was concealed from the vulgar, while he exhorts us to collect the multitude of beings into one undivided union? If, therefore, this is the one being, or that which is the highest, and which is perfectly established above the reasons conversant with opinion, is it not absurd to confound dogmas about intelligibles with doxastic arguments? For indeed, such a form of discourse is not adapted to the hypothesis about true beings, nor does the intellection of unapparent and separate causes harmonize with dialectic exercises; but these differ from each other, so far as intellect is established above opinion, as Timæus informs us, and

† For επιστολας, it is necessary to read επιβολας.

not Timæus only, but likewise the dæmoniacal Aristotle, who, discoursing on a power of this kind, exhorts us to make our investigations, neither about things perfectly unapparent to us, nor about such as are more known.

It is far therefore from being the case, that Parmenides, who places the science of beings above that which appears to be truth to those who rank sense before intellect, should introduce doxastic knowledge to an intellective nature, since a knowledge of this is kind is dubious, various, and unstable; or that he should speculate true being with this doxastic wisdom, and inane discussion. For a various form of knowledge does not harmonise† with that which is simple, nor the multiform with the uniform, nor the doxastic with the intelligible.

But still further, nor must this be omitted, that such a mode of discourse is perfectly foreign from the discussion of Parmenides. For he discourses about all beings, and delivers the order of wholes, their progression beginning from *The One*, and their conversion ending in the one. But the argumentative method is very remote from scientific theory. Does it not therefore appear, that Plato must have attributed a discordant hypothesis to Parmenides, if it be said that he merely regards an exercise through opposite arguments, and that for the sake of the power employed in this exercise, he excites the whole of this evolution of reasons? Indeed, it will be found that in all the other dialogues, Plato attributes hypotheses to each of the philosophers adapted to their peculiar tenets. Thus to Timæus, he assigns the doctrine about nature; to Socrates that of a republic; to the Elean guest, that about being; and to the priestess Diotima, that respecting love. Afterwards, each of the other dialogues confines itself to those arguments which are adapted to the writings of the principal person of the dialogue. But Parmenides alone will appear to us wise in his poems, and in his diligent investigation of true being, but in the Platonic scene, he will be the leader of a juvenile muse. This opinion, therefore, accuses Plato of dissimilitude of imitation, though he himself condemns the poets, for ascribing to the sons of the Gods a love of money, and a life subject to the dominion of the passions. How, therefore, can we refer a discussion of doxastic and empty arguments to the leader of the truth of beings?

But if it be necessary that omitting a multitude of arguments, we should make Plato himself a witness of the proposed discussion, we will cite if you please what is written in the *Theætetus* and *Sophista*; for from these dialogues what we assert will be apparent. In the *Theætetus* then

† For μονον αρμοστεον, it is necessary to read ειδος αναρμοστεον.

Socrates being excited by a young man to a confutation of those who assert that being is immoveable, attacks among these an opinion of this kind entertained by Parmenides, and at the same time assigns the cause. "I blush," says he, "for Parmenides, who is one of these, more than for all the rest; for I, when very young, was conversant with him when he was very elderly, and he appeared to me to possess a certain profundity perfectly generous. I am afraid therefore, lest we do not understand what has been asserted, and much more am I fearful that we fall short of the meaning of Parmenides." With great propriety therefore do we assert, that the proposed discussion does not regard a logical exercise, and make this the end of the whole, but that it pertains to the science of the first principles of things. For how could Socrates using a power of this kind, and neglecting the knowledge of things, testify that the discourse of Parmenides possessed a depth perfectly generous? And what venerableness can there be in adopting a method which proceeds doxastically, through opposite reasons, and in undertaking such an invention of arguments?

Again, in the *Sophista*, exciting the Elean guest to a perspicuous evolution of the things proposed by him, and evincing that he was now accustomed to more profound discourses: "Inform me," say he, "whether it is your custom to give a prolix discussion of a subject which you are able to demonstrate to any one by interrogations; I mean such discussions as Parmenides himself formerly used, accompanied with all-beautiful reasons, and of which I was an auditor when I was very young, and he was very elderly?" What reason then can be assigned, why we should not believe Socrates, when he asserts that the arguments of Parmenides were all-beautiful, and possessed a generous profundity, and why we should degrade the discussion of Parmenides, hurl it from essence and being, and transfer it to a vulgar, trifling, and empty contest, neither considering that discourses of this kind are alone adapted to youth, nor regarding the hypothesis of *being* characterized by *The One*, nor any thing else which opposes such an opinion?

But I likewise think it is proper that the authors of this hypothesis, should consider the power of dialectic, such as it is exhibited by Socrates in the *Republic*; - how, as he says, it surrounds all disciplines like a defensive enclosure, and elevates those that use it, to *The Good Itself*, and the first unities, purifies the eye of the soul, establishes it in true beings, and the one principle of all things, and ends at last in that which is no longer hypothetical. For if the power of this dialectic is so great, and the end of this path so mighty, it is not proper to confound doxastic arguments, with a method of this kind. For the former regards the

opinions of men, but the latter is called garrulity by the vulgar. And the one is perfectly destitute of disciplinative science, but the other is the defensive enclosure of such sciences, and the passage to it is through these. Again, the doxastic method of reasoning has for its end† the apparent, but the dialectic method endeavours to arrive at *The One* itself, always employing for this purpose steps of ascent, and at last, beautifully ends in the nature of *The Good*.

By no means therefore, is it fit that we should draw down to doxastic arguments, a method which is established among the most accurate sciences. For the merely logical method which presides over the demonstrative phantasy, is of a secondary nature, and is alone pleased with contentious discussions; but our dialectic, for the most part, employs divisions and analyses as primary sciences, and as imitating the progression of beings from *The One*, and their conversion to it again. But it likewise sometimes uses definitions and demonstrations, and prior to these the definitive method, and the dividing method prior to this. On the contrary, the doxastic method is deprived of the incontrovertible reasonings of demonstration. Is it not, therefore, necessary that these powers must be separated from each other, and that the discussion of Parmenides, which employs our dialectic, must be free from the empty variety of mere argument, and must fabricate its reasonings with a view to being itself, and not to that which is apparent? And thus much may suffice in answer to those who reprobate our hypotheses. For if all this cannot convince them, we shall in vain endeavour to persuade them, and urge them to the speculation of things.

CHAPTER X

But a greater and more difficult contest remains for me, against those lovers of the speculation of beings, who look to the science of first causes, as the end proposed in the hypothesis of the Platonic *Parmenides*; and this contest we will accomplish, if you please, by numerous and more known arguments.

And in the first place, we shall define what that is, about which our discourse against them will be employed; for this, I think, will render the mystic doctrine of Plato concerning divine natures, apparent in the highest degree. There are, therefore, nine hypotheses which are discussed by Parmenides in this dialogue, as we have evinced in our commentaries upon it. And the five precedaneous hypotheses suppose

† τελος is omitted in the original.

that *The One* has a subsistence, and through this hypothesis, that all beings, the mediums of wholes, and the terminations of the progressions of things, may be supposed to subsist. But the four hypotheses which follow these, introduce *The One*, not having a subsistence, according to the exhortation of the dialectic method, show that by taking away *The One*, all beings, and such things as have an apparent existence, must be entirely subverted, and propose to themselves the confutation of this hypothesis. And some of the hypotheses evidently conclude every thing according to reason, but others (if I may be allowed the expression) perfectly evince things more impossible than impossibilities; which circumstance some prior to us perceiving, as it appears to me, necessarily to happen in these hypotheses, have considered it as deserving discussion,† in their treatises on this dialogue.

With respect to the first of the hypotheses therefore, almost all agree in asserting, that Plato through this celebrates the superessential principle of wholes, as ineffable, unknown, and above all being. But all do not explain the hypothesis posterior to this after the same manner. For the ancient Platonists, and those who participated the philosophy of Plotinus assert that an intellectual nature presents itself to the view in this hypothesis, subsisting from the superessential principle of things, and endeavour to harmonize to the one and all-perfect power of intellect, such conclusions as are the result of this hypothesis. But that leader of ours to truth about the Gods, and confabulator of Plato (that I may use the language of Homer) who transferred what was indefinite in the theory of the more ancient philosophers, to bound, and reduced the confusion of the different orders to an intellectual distinction, in the writings which he communicated to his associates; - this our leader, in his treatise on the present subject, calls upon us to adopt a distinct division of the conclusions, to transfer this division to the divine orders, and to harmonize the first and most simple of the things exhibited to the first of beings; but to adapt those in the middle rank to middle natures, according to the order which they are allotted among beings; and such as are last and multiform, to ultimate progressions. For the nature of being is not one, simple, and indivisible; but as in sensibles, the mighty heaven is one, yet it comprehends in itself a multitude of bodies; and the monad connectedly contains multitude, but in the multitude there is an order of progression; and of sensibles, some are first, some middle, and some last; and prior to these, in souls, from one soul a multitude of souls subsists, and of these, some are placed in an

† For διαιτης, I read διατριβης.

order nearer, but others more remote from their wholeness, and others again fill up the medium of the extremes; - in like manner, it is doubtless necessary that among perfectly true beings, such genera as are uniform and occult, should be established in the one and first cause of wholes, but that others should proceed into all multitude, and a whole number, and that others should contain the bond of these, in a middle situation. It is likewise by no means proper to harmonize the peculiarities of first natures with such as are second, nor of those that possess a subject order, with such as are more unical, but it is requisite that among these, some should have powers different from others, and that there should be an order in this progression of true beings, and an unfolding of second from first natures.

In short, being which subsists according to, or is characterized by *The One*, proceeds indeed from the unity prior to beings, but generates the whole divine genus, *viz.* the intelligible, intellectual, supermundane, and that which proceeds as far as to the mundane order. But our preceptor likewise asserts, that each of the conclusions is indicative of a divine peculiarity. And though all the conclusions harmonize to all the progressions of *the one being*, or of being characterized by *The One*, yet I am of opinion, it is by no means wonderful, that some conclusions should more accord with some hypotheses than with others. For such things as express the peculiarity of certain orders, do not necessarily belong to all the Gods; but such as belong to all, are doubtless by a much greater reason present with each. If, therefore, we ascribe to Plato, an adventitious division of the divine orders,[†] and do not clearly evince that, in other dialogues, he celebrates the progressions of the Gods from on high to the extremity of things, sometimes in fables respecting the soul, and at other times, in other theological modes, we shall absurdly attribute to him, such a division of being, and together with this, of the progression of *The One*. But if we can evince from other dialogues, that he (as will be manifest in the course of this work) has celebrated all the kingdoms of the Gods, in a certain respect, is it not impossible, that in the most mystic of all his works, he should deliver through the first hypothesis, the exempt transcendency of *The One* with respect to all the genera of beings, to being itself, to a psychical essence, to form, and to matter, but that he should make no mention of the divine progressions, and their orderly separation? For if it is proper to contemplate last things only, why do we touch on the first principle before other things? Or if we think fit to unfold the

[†] For προαξεων, it is necessary to read ταξεων.

multitude of the proper hypotheses, why do we pass by the genus of the Gods, and the divisions which it contains? Or if we unfold the natures subsisting between the first and last of things, why do we leave unknown the whole orders of those divine beings, which subsist between *The One*, and natures that are in any respect deified? For all these particulars evince, that the whole discourse is defective, with respect to the science of things divine.

But still farther, Socrates, in the *Philebus*, calls upon those that love the contemplation of beings, to use the dividing method, and always to explore the monads of total orders, and the duads, triads, or any other numbers proceeding from these. If this then is rightly determined, it is doubtless necessary that the *Parmenides*, which employs the whole dialectic method, and discourses about being which is characterized by *The One*, should neither speculate multitude about *The One*, nor remain in the one monad of beings, nor in short, introduce to *The One* which is above all beings, the whole multitude of first beings immediately, but should unfold, as in the first order, such beings as have an occult subsistence, and are allied to *The One*; but as in the middle rank, those genera of the Gods which subsist according to progression, and which are more divided than the extremely united, but are allotted a union more perfect, than such as have proceeded to the utmost; and should unfold as in the last rank, such as subsist according to the last division of powers, and together with these, such as have a deified essence. If, therefore, the first of the hypotheses is about *The One* which is above all multitude, it is doubtless necessary that the hypothesis which follows this, should not unfold being itself in an indefinite and indistinct manner, but should deliver all the orders of beings. For the dividing method does not admit, that we should introduce the whole of multitude at once to *The One*, as Socrates teaches us in the *Philebus*.

Besides, we may evince the truth of what we assert from the very method of the demonstrations. For the first of the conclusions become immediately manifest from the least, most simple, most known, and as it were common conceptions. But those which are next in order to these, become apparent through a greater multitude of conceptions, and such as are more various. And the last conclusions are entirely the most composite. For he always uses the first conclusions, as subservient to the demonstration of those that follow,† and presents us with an intellectual paradigm of the order observed in geometry, or other disciplines, in the connexion of these conclusions with each other. If,

† For εχοντων, it is necessary to read εχομενων.

therefore, discourses bring with them an image of the things of which they are interpreters, and if, as are the evolutions from demonstrations, such must the order necessarily be of the things exhibited, it appears to me to be necessary, that such things as derive their beginning from the most simple principles, must be in every respect of a more primary nature, and must be arranged as conjoined with *The One*; but that such as are always multiplied, and suspended from various demonstrations, must have proceeded farther from the subsistence† of *The One*.

For the demonstrations which have two conclusions, must necessarily contain the conclusions prior to themselves; but those which contain primary, spontaneous, and simple conceptions, are not necessary united with such as are more composite, which are exhibited through more abundant media, and which are farther distant from the principle of beings. It appears therefore, that some of the conclusions are indicative of more divine orders, but others, of such as are more subordinate; some, of more united, and others, of more multiplied orders; and again, some, of more uniform, and others, of more multiform progressions. For demonstrations are universally from causes, and things first. If, therefore, first are the causes of second conclusions, there is an order of causes, and things caused, in the multitude of the conclusions. For, indeed, to confound all things, and speculate them indefinitely in one, neither accords with the nature of things, nor the science of Plato.

CHAPTER XI

Again, therefore, let us discuss this affair in another way, and view with the dianoetic power, where any thing futile is delivered. For let it be said, if you please, and we will first of all allow it, that the conclusions of this second hypothesis are about true being. But as this is multitude, and not only one itself, like *The One* prior to beings; for being is that which is passive to *The One*, as the Elean guest in the *Sophista informs* us; and as it is universally acknowledged by our opponents, who establish that which is first as *The One*, but intellect, as *one many*, soul, as *one and many*, and body as *many and one*:- as therefore, this has been asserted a thousand times, I mean that in true being there is multitude together with union, whether will they say that these things harmonize with the whole of being, but not with its parts, or both with the whole and its parts? And again, we ask them, whether

† For αποστασεως, it is necessary to read υποστασεως.

they attribute all things to each part of being, or whether they ascribe different things to different parts?

If, therefore, they are of opinion, that each particular should alone harmonize with the whole of being, being will consist of non-beings, that which is moved, of things immoveable, that which abides, of things deprived of permanency, and universally, all things will consist of their opposites, and we shall no longer agree with the discourse of Parmenides, who says that the parts of *being characterized by The One*, are in a certain respect wholes, and that each of them is one and being, in a manner similar to the whole. But if we attribute all things to each part, and there is nothing which we do not make all things, how can the summit of being, and that which is most eminently one, contain a wholeness, and an incomprehensible multitude of parts? How can it at one and the saine time contain the whole of number, figure, motion and permanency, and in short all forms and genera? For these differ from each other, and the bypothesis will assert things impossible. For things near to, will be similarly multiplied with things remote from *The One*, and that which is first, will not be a less multitude than that which is last; nor again, will the last of things be a less one than the first, and things in the middle will have no difference with respect to division from the extremes.

As therefore, it is not proper to ascribe all this multitude of conclusions to the whole alone, nor to consider all things in a similar manner in all the parts of being, it remains that different conclusions must harmonize with different things. It is necessary, therefore, that either the enumeration of the conclusions, should be inordinate, or ordinate. But if they say they are inordinate, they neither speak agreeably to the dialectic method, nor to the mode of demonstrations, which always generate things secondary from such as are first, nor to the science of Plato, which always accompanies the order of things. But if they say the conclusions are regular, I think it is entirely necessary, that they should either begin from things first according to nature, or from things last. But if from things last *being characterised by The One* will be the last, and that which is moved according to time, the first. This, however, is impossible. For that which participates of time, must by a much greater priority participate of first being. But that which participates of first being does not necessarily participate of time. First being, therefore is above time. If then Plato begins from first being, but ends in that which participates of time, he proceeds supernally from the first to the last parts of true being. Hence, the first conclusions are to be referred to the first orders, the middle for the same reason, to the

middle orders, and the last, as is evident, to such as are last. For it is necessary, as our discourse has evinced, that different conclusions should be assigned to different things, and that a distribution of this kind should commence from such things as are highest.

But likewise, the order of the hypotheses, as it appears to me, is a sufficient argument of the truth of our assertion. For with us *The One* which is exempt from all multitude, is allotted the first order, and from this the evolution of all arguments commences. But the second order after this, is about true beings, and the unity which these participate. And the third order in regular succession, is about soul. Whether, therefore, is it about every soul or not? In answer to this, we shall observe, that our leader Syrianus has beautifully shown, that the discourse about whole souls is comprehended in the second hypothesis. If, therefore, the order of these three hypotheses proceeds according to the nature of things, it is evident that the second is produced from the first, and the last from the second. For I would ask those who are not entirely unskilled in discourses of this kind, what can be more allied to *The One*, than being characterized by *The One*, which the first of the conclusions of the second hypothesis unfolds? Or what can be more allied to soul, than that which participates of time, which subsists divisibly, and which is the last thing exhibited in this hypothesis? For the life of partial as well as of total souls is according to time. And first being is that which first participates of *The One*, and through its connexion with being, has a redundant hyparxis with respect to the imparticipable unity. But if this hypothesis is the middle, and if we aptly harmonize the highest conclusions with things highest, we should doubtless harmonize middles with middles. For this hypothesis commencing from first being, proceeds through all the genera posterior to it, till it ends in a nature participating of time.

But, farther, from the common confession of those interpreters of Plato, who were skilled in divine concerns, we can demonstrate the same things as we have above asserted. For Plotinus, in his book *On Numbers*, enquiring whether beings subsist prior to numbers, or numbers prior to beings, clearly asserts that the first being subsists prior to numbers, and that it generates the divine number. But if this is rightly determined by him, and being is generative of the first number, but number is produced by being, it is not proper to confound the order of these genera, nor to collect them into one hypostasis, nor, since Plato separately produces first being, and separately number, to refer each of the conclusions to the same order. For it is by no means lawful, that cause and the thing caused, should have either the same power, or the

same order: but these are distinct from each other; and the science concerning them is likewise distinct, and neither the nature, nor the definition of them is one and the same.

But, after Plotinus, Porphyry in his treatise *On Principles*, evinces by many and beautiful arguments, that intellect is eternal, but that at the same time, it contains in itself something prior to the eternal, and through which it is conjoined with *The One*. For *The One* is above all eternity, but the eternal has a second, or rather third order in intellect. For it appears to me to be necessary that eternity should be established in the middle of that which is prior to the eternal, and the eternal. But of this hereafter. At the same time, thus much may be collected from what has been said, that intellect contains something in itself better than the eternal. Admitting this, therefore, we ask the father of this assertion, whether this something better than the eternal is not only being characterized by *The One*, but is a whole and parts, and all multitude, number and figure, that which, is moved, and that which is permanent; or whether we are to ascribe some of the conclusions to it, but not others? For it is impossible that all these can accord with a nature prior to eternity, since every intellectual motion, and likewise permanency, are established in eternity. But if we are to ascribe some of the conclusions to it, and not others, it is evident that other orders in intellect are to be investigated, and that each of the conclusions is to be referred to that order, to which it appears particulary adapted. For intellect is not one in number, and an atom, as it appeared to be to some of the ancients, but it comprehends in itself the whole progression of first being.

But the third who makes for our purpose after these, is the divine Iamblichus, who, in his treatise *Concerning the Gods*, accuses those who place the genera of being in intelligibles, because the number and variety of these is more remote from the one. But afterwards he informs us where these ought to be placed. For they are produced in the end of the intellectual order, by the Gods which there subsist. How the genera of being, however, both are, and are not in intelligibles, will be hereafter apparent. But if, according to his arrangement of the divine orders, intelligibles are exempt from the genera of being, much more are they, exempt from similitude and dissimilitude, equality and inequality. Each of the conclusions, therefore, ought not in a similar manner to be accommodated to all things, so as to refer them to the whole breadth of the intelligible, or intellectual order. Hence from what the best of the interpreters have said, when philosophizing according to their own doctrines, both the multitude of the divine orders, and of the Platonic

arguments, are to be considered as proceeding according to an orderly distinction.

In addition, likewise, to what has been said, this also may be asserted, that we cannot, on any other hypothesis, obtain a rational solution of the many doubts which present themselves on this subject, but shall ignorantly ascribe what is rash and vain to this treatise of Plato. For in the first place, why are there only so many conclusions, and neither more nor less? For there are fourteen conclusions. But as there are so many, we cannot assign the reason of this, unless we distribute them in conjunction with things themselves. In the second place, neither shall we be able to find the cause of the order of the conclusions with respect to each other, and how some have a prior, and others a posterior establishment, according to the reason of science, unless the order of the conclusions proceeds in conjunction with the progression of beings. In the third place, why do some of the conclusions become known from things proximately demonstrated, but others from proceeding demonstrations? For that *The One* is a whole and contains parts, is demonstrated from being, which is characterized by *The One*; but its subsistence in itself and in another, is placed in a proximate order, after the possession of figure, but is demonstrated from whole and parts. Or why are some things often demonstrated, from two of the particulars previously evinced, but others from one of them? For we shall be ignorant of each of these, and shall neither be able scientifically to speculate their number, nor their order, nor their alliance to each other, unless following things themselves, we evince that this whole hypothesis is a dialectic arrangement, proceeding from on high through all the middle genera, as far as to the termination of first being.

Again, if we should say, that all the conclusions demonstrate syllogistically only, in what respect shall we differ from those, who assert that the whole of this discussion consists of doxastic arguments, and only regards a mere verbal contest? But if it is not only syllogistic, but likewise demonstrative, it is doubtless necessary, that the middle should be the cause of, and by nature prior to the conclusion. As, therefore, we make the conclusions of the proceeding reasons, the media of those that follow, the things which the arguments respect, must doubtless have a similar order as to being, and their progeny must be the causes of things subject, and generative of such as are secondary. But if this be admitted, how can we allow that all of them have the same peculiarity and nature? For cause, and that which is produced from cause, are separated from each other.

But this likewise will happen to those who assert that one nature is to be explored in all the arguments, that they will by no means perceive how in the three first conclusions, *The One* remains unseparated from being, but is first separated in the fourth conclusion. But in all the following conclusions, *The One* is explored considered as subsisting itself by itself. Is it not therefore necessary, that these orders must differ from each other? For that which is without separation, in consequence of having an occult and undivided subsistence, is more allied to *The One*, but that which is separated, has proceeded farther from the first principle of things.

Again, if you are willing to consider the multitude of arguments, and the extent of the hypothesis, how much it differs from that which follows it, - neither from this will it appear to you to be entirely about one and an unseparated nature. For reasonings about divine concerns, are contracted in the more principal causes, because in these the occult is more abundant than the perspicuous, and the ineffable than the unknown. But they become multiplied and evolved, by proceeding to divine orders more proximate to our nature. For such things as are more allied to that which is ineffable, unknown, and exempt in inaccessible places, are allotted an hyparxis more foreign from verbal enunciation. But such things as have proceeded farther, are both more known to us, and more apparent to the phantasy, than such as have a prior subsistence.

This, therefore, being abundantly proved, it is necessary that the second hypothesis, should unfold all the divine orders, and should proceed on high, from the most simple and unical to the whole multitude, and all the number of divine natures, in which the order of true being ends, which indeed is spread under the unities of the Gods, and at the same time is divided in conjunction with their occult and ineffable peculiarities. If, therefore, we are not deceived in admitting this, it follows, that from this hypothesis, the continuity of the divine orders, and the progression of second from first natures, is to be assumed, together with the peculiarity of all the divine genera. And indeed, what their communion is with each other, and what their distinction proceeding according to measure, likewise, the auxiliaries which may be found in other dialogues respecting the truth of real beings, or the unities which they contain, are all to be referred to this hypothesis. For, here we may contemplate the total progressions of the Gods, and their all-perfect orders, according to theological science. For as we have before shown that the whole treatise of the *Parmenides* has reference to the truth of things, and that it was not devised as a vain

evolution of words, it is doubtless necessary, that the nine hypotheses which it discusses, employing the dialectic method, but speculating with divine science, should be about things and certain natures, which are either middle or last. If, therefore, Parmenides acknowledges that his whole discourse will be about *The One*, and how it subsists with respect to itself, and all other things, it is evident that the speculation of *The One*, must commence from that which is highest, but end in that which is the last of all things. For the hyparxis of *The One* proceeds from on high, as far as to the most obscure hypostasis of things.

CHAPTER XII

As the first hypothesis, however, demonstrates by negations the ineffable supereminence of the first principle of things, and evinces that he is exempt from all essence and knowledge, - it is evident that the hypothesis after this, as being proximate to it, must unfold the whole order of the Gods. For Parmenides does not alone assume the intellectual and essential peculiarity of the Gods, but likewise the divine characteristic of their hyparxis through the whole of this hypothesis. For what other *one* can that be which is participated by being, than that which is in every being divine, and through which all things are conjoined with the imparticipable one? For as bodies through their *life* are conjoined with soul, and as souls through their *intellective* part, are extended to total intellect, and the first intelligence, in like manner true beings through *The One* which they contain are reduced to an exempt union, and subsist in unproceeding union with this first cause.

But because this hypothesis commences from that which is *one being*, or *being characterized by The One*, and establishes the summit of intelligibles as the first after *The One*, but ends in an essence which participates of time, and deduces divine souls to the extremities of the divine orders, it is necessary that the third hypothesis should demonstrate by various conclusions, the whole multitude of partial souls, and the diversities which they contain. And thus far the separate and incorporeal hypostasis proceeds.

After this follows that nature which is divisible about bodies, and inseparable from matter, which the fourth hypothesis delivers supernally suspended from the Gods. And the last hypothesis is the procession of matter, whether considered as one, or as various, which the fifth hypothesis demonstrates by negations, according to its dissimilar

similitude[†] to the first. But sometimes, indeed, the negations are privations, and sometimes the exempt causes of all the productions. And what is the most wonderful of all, the highest negations are only enunciative, but some in a supereminent manner, and others according to deficiency. But each of the negations consequent to these is affirmative; the one paradigmatically, but the other iconically, or after the manner of an image. But the middle corresponds to the order of soul, for it is composed from affirmative and negative conclusions. But it possesses negations co-ordinate to affirmations. Nor is it alone multiplied, like material natures,[‡] nor does it possess an adventitious one; but *The One* which it contains, though it is still one, yet subsists in motion and multiplication, and in its progressions is, as it were, absorbed by essence. And such are the hypotheses which unfold all beings, both separable and inseparable, together with the causes of wholes, as well exempt, as subsisting in things themselves, according to the hyparxis of *The One*.

But there are four other hypotheses besides these, which by taking away *The One*, evince that all things must be entirely subverted, both beings and things in generation, and that no being can any longer have any subsistence; and this, in order that he may demonstrate *The One* to be the cause of being and preservation, that through it all things participate of the nature of being, and that each has its hyparxis suspended from *The One*. And in short, we syllogistically collect this through all beings, that if *The One* is, all things subsist as far as to the last hypostasis, and if it is not, no being has any subsistence. The One, therefore, is both the hypostatic and preservative cause of all things; which Parmenides also himself collects at the end of the dialogue. With respect, however, to the hypothesis of the *Parmenides*, its division, and the speculation of its several parts, we have sufficiently treated in our commentaries on that dialogue; so that it would be superfluous to enter into a prolix discussion of these particulars at present. But as from what has been said, it appears whence we may assume the whole of theology, and from what dialogues we may collect into one the theology distributed according to parts, we shall in the next place treat about the common dogmas of Plato, which are adapted to sacred concerns, and which extend to all the divine orders, and shall evince that each of these is defined by him according to the most perfect science. For things

[†] For *ανομοιοτητα*, it is necessary to read *ομοιοτητα*.

[‡] Instead of *οτε ως ολα*, read *ουτε ως τα ενυλα*.

common are prior to such as are peculiar, and are more known according to nature.

CHAPTER XIII

In the first place, therefore, we shall assume the things which are demonstrated in the *Laws*, and contemplate how they take the lead, with respect to the truth about the Gods, and are the most ancient of all the other mystic conceptions about a divine nature. Three things, therefore, are asserted by Plato in these writings; that there are Gods; that their providence extends to all things; and that they administer all things according to justice, and suffer no perversion from worse natures.

That these then obtain the first rank† among all theological dogmas, is perfectly evident. For what can be of a more leading nature, than the hyparxis of the Gods, or than boniform providence, or immutable and undeviating power? Through which they produce secondary natures uniformly, preserve themselves in an undefiled manner, and convert them to themselves. But the Gods indeed govern other things, but suffer nothing from subordinate natures, nor are changed with the variety of the things to which their providence extends. We shall learn, however, how these things are defined according to nature, if we endeavour to embrace by a reasoning process the scientific method of Plato about each of them; and prior to these, survey by what irrefragable arguments he proves that there are Gods; and thus afterwards consider such problems as are conjoined with this dogma.

Of all beings, therefore, it is necessary that some should move only, but that others should be moved only, and that the natures situated between these, should both move and be moved. And with respect to these last it is necessary, either that they should move others being themselves moved by others, or that they should be self-motive. These four hypostases likewise, are necessarily placed in an orderly series, one after another; that which is moved only and suffers, depending on other primary causes; that which moves others, and is at the same time moved, being prior to this; that which is self-motive, and which is beyond that which both moves and is moved, beginning from itself, and through its own motion imparting the representation of being moved, to other things; and that which is immoveable, preceding whatever participates either producing or passive motion. For every thing self-motive, in consequence of possessing its perfection in a transition

† For *αρχη δευτερα*, it is necessary to read *αρχειοτερα*.

and interval of life, depends on another more ancient cause, which always subsists according to sameness, and in a similar manner, and whose life is not in time, but in eternity. For time is an image of eternity.

If, therefore, all things which are moved by themselves, are moved according to time, but the eternal form of motion is above that which is carried in time, the self-motive nature will be second in order, and not the first of beings. But that which moves others, and is moved by others, must necessarily be suspended from a self-motive nature: and not this alone, but likewise every alter-motive fabrication, as the Athenian guest demonstrates. For if all things, says he, should stand still, unless self-motive natures had a subsistence among things, there would be no such thing as that which is first moved. For that which is immoveable, is by no means naturally adapted to be moved, nor will there then be that which is first moved; but the alter-motive nature is indigent of another moving power. The self-motive nature, therefore, alone, as beginning from its own energy, will move both itself and others in a secondary manner. For a thing of this kind imparts the power of being moved to alter-motive natures, in the same manner as an immoveable nature imparts a motive power to all beings. In the third place, that which is moved only, must first of all be suspended from things moved by another, but moving others. For it is necessary, both that other things, and the series of things moved, which extends in an orderly manner from on high to the last of things, should be filled with their proper media.

All bodies, therefore, belong to those things which are naturally moved only, and are passive. For they are productive of nothing, on account of possessing an hypostasis endued with interval, and participating of magnitude and bulk; since every thing productive and motive of others, naturally produces and moves, by employing an incorporeal power.

But of incorporeal natures, some are divisible about bodies, but others are exempt from such a division about the last of things. Those incorporeals, therefore, which are divisible about the bulks of bodies, whether they subsist in qualities, or in material forms, belong to the number of things moved by another, but at the same time moving others. For these, because they possess an incorporeal allotment, participate of a motive power; but because they are divided about bodies, are deprived of the power of verging to themselves, are divided together with their subjects, and are full of sluggishness from these, they are indigent of a motive nature which is not borne along in a foreign seat, but possesses an hypostasis in itself. Where, therefore, shall we obtain

that which moves itself? For things extended into natures possessing bulk and interval, or which are divided in these, and subsist inseparably about them, must necessarily either be moved only, or be motive through others. But it is necessary, as we have before observed, that a self-motive nature should be prior to these, which is perfectly established in itself, and not in others, and which fixes its energies in itself, and not in things different from itself. There is, therefore, another certain nature exempt from bodies, both in the heavens and in these very mutable elements, from which bodies primarily derive the power of being moved. Hence, if it be requisite to discover what such an essence as this is, (rightly following Socrates, and considering what the end of things is,) which by being present to alter-motive natures, imparts to them a representation of self-motion, to which of the above mentioned natures shall we ascribe the power of things being moved from themselves? For all inanimate natures are alone alter-motive, and whatever they suffer, they are adapted to suffer, through a certain power externally moving and compelling. It remains, therefore, that animated natures must possess this representation, and that they are self-motive in a secondary degree, but that the soul which is in them, primarily moves itself, and is moved by itself, and that through a power derived from itself as it imparts life to bodies, so likewise it extends to them from itself a representation of being moved by themselves.

If, therefore, the self-motive essence is more ancient than alter-motive natures, but soul is primarily self-motive, from which the image of self-motion is imparted to bodies, soul will be beyond bodies, and the motion of every body, will be the progeny of soul, and of the motion it contains. Hence it is necessary that the whole heaven and all the bodies it contains possessing various motions, and being moved with these different motions, according to nature (for a circulation is natural to every body of this kind) should have ruling souls, which are essentially more ancient than bodies, and which are moved in themselves, and supernally illuminate these with the power of being moved. It is necessary, therefore, that these souls which dispose in an orderly manner the whole world and the parts it contains, and who impart to every thing corporeal which is of itself destitute of life, the power of being moved, inspiring it, for this purpose, with the cause of motion, should either move all things conformably to reason, or after a contrary manner, which it is not lawful to assert. But if indeed, this world and every thing in it which is disposed in an orderly manner, and is moved equally and perpetually according to nature, as is demonstrated, partly in the mathematical disciplines, and partly in

physical discussions, is suspended from an irrational soul, which moving itself moves also other things, neither the order of the periods, nor the motion which is bounded by one reason, nor the position of bodies, nor any other or those things which are generated according to nature, will have a stable cause, and which is able to distribute every thing in an orderly manner, and according to an invariable sameness of subsistence. For every thing irrational is naturally adapted to be adorned by something different from itself, and is indefinite and unadorned in its own nature. But to commit all heaven to a thing of this kind, and a circulation revolving according to reason, and with an invariable sameness, is, by no means adapted, either to the nature of things, or to our undisciplined conceptions. If however, an intellectual soul, and which employs reason, governs all things, and if every thing which is moved with a perpetual lation, is governed by a soul of this kind, and there is no one of the wholes in the universe destitute of soul (for no body is honourable if deprived of such a power as this, as Theophrastus somewhere says) if this be the case, whether does it possess this intellectual, perfect, and beneficent power, according to participation, or according to essence? For if, according to essence, it is necessary that every soul should be of this kind, since each according to its own nature is self-motive. But if, according to participation, there will be another intellect subsisting in energy, more ancient than soul, which essentially possesses intellection, and by its very being pre-assumes in itself the uniform knowledge of wholes; since it is also necessary that the soul which is essentialized according to reason, should possess that which pertains to intellect through participation, and that the intellectual nature should be twofold; the one subsisting primarily in a divine intellect itself; but the other, which proceeds from this, subsisting secondarily in soul. To which, you may add, if you please, the presence of intellectual illumination in body. For whence is the whole of this heaven either spherical or moved in a circle, and whence does it revolve with a sameness of circulation according to one definite order? For how could it always be allotted the same idea and power immutably according to nature, if it did not participate of specific formation according to intellect? For, soul, indeed, is the supplier of motion; but the cause of a firm establishment, and that which reduces the unstable mutation of things that are moved, into sameness, and also a life which is bounded by one reason, and a circulation which subsists with invariable sameness, will evidently be superior to soul.

Body, therefore, and the whole of this sensible nature belong to things which are alter-motive. But soul is self-motive, binding in itself all

corporeal motions; and prior to this is intellect which is immoveable. Let no one, however, suppose that I assert this immobility of intellect to resemble that which is sluggish, destitute of life,† and without respiration, but that it is the leading cause of all motion, and the fountain, if you are willing so to denominate it, of all life, both of that which is converted to itself, and of that which has its hypostasis in other things. Through these causes also, the world is denominated by Timæus, an animal endued with soul and intellect; being called by him an animal according to its own nature, and the life pervading to it from soul, and which is distributed about it, but animated or endued with soul, according to the presence of a divine soul in it, and endued with intellect, according to intellectual domination. For the supply of life, the government of soul, and the participation of intellect connect and contain the whole of heaven.

If, however, this intellect is essentially intellect, since Timæus indicating that the essence of intellect is the same with its intellection, denominates it divine; for he says, that soul receiving a divine intellect led an upright and wise life; if, therefore, this be the case, it is necessary that the whole world should be suspended from its divinity, and that motion indeed should be present to this universe from soul, but that its perpetual permanency and sameness of subsistence should be derived from intellect, and that its one union, the conspiration in it and sympathy, and its all-perfect measure should originate from that unity,‡ from which intellect is uniform, soul is one,§ every being is whole and perfect according to its own nature, and every thing secondary together with perfection in its own proper nature, participates of another more excellent peculiarity, from an order which is always established above it. For that which is corporeal being alter-motive, derives from soul the representation of self-motive power, and is through it an animal. But soul being self-motive participates of a life according to intellect, and energizing according to time, possesses a never-ceasing energy, and an ever-vigilant life from its proximity to intellect. And intellect possessing its life in eternity, always subsisting essentially in energy,* and fixing all

† For αξων read αζων.

‡ For και της εναδος, read, και απο της εναδος.

§ For και ο νου, ενοειδη μια και η ψυχη, read, και ο νους ενοειδης, και η ψυχη μια.

* For αιων ενεργεια, read, αει ων ενεργεια.

its stable intellection at once in intellect, is entirely deific through the cause prior to itself. For it has twofold energies as Plotinus says, some as intellect, but others as being inebriated with nectar. And elsewhere he observes, that this intellect, by that which is prior to itself and is not intellect, is a god; in the same manner as soul, by its summit which is above soul, is intellect; and as body, by the power which is prior to body, is soul.

All things therefore, as we have said, are suspended from *The One* through intellect and soul as media. And intellect indeed has the form of unity; but soul has the form of intellect; and the body of the world is vital. But every thing is conjoined with that which is prior to itself. And of natures posterior to these, one in a more proximate, but the other in a more remote degree, enjoys that which is divine. And divinity, indeed, is prior to intellect, being primarily carried in an intellectual nature; but intellect is most divine, as being deified prior to other things; and soul is divine, so far as it requires an intellectual medium. But the body which participates of a soul of this kind, so far as body indeed, is also itself divine; for the illumination of divine† light pervades supernally as far as to the last dependencies; yet it is not simply divine; but soul, by looking to intellect, and living from itself, is primarily divine.

My reasoning is also the same about each of the whole spheres, and about the bodies they contain. For all these imitate the whole heaven, since these likewise have a perpetual allotment; and with respect to the sublunary elements, they have not entirely an essential mutation, but they abide in the universe according to their wholenesses, and contain in themselves partial animals. For every wholeness has posterior to itself more partial essences. As, therefore, in the heavens, the number of the stars proceeds together with the whole spheres, and as in the earth the multitude of partial terrestrial animals subsists together with their wholeness, thus also it appears to me to be necessary that in the wholes which have an intermediate subsistence, each element should be filled up with appropriate numbers. For how in the extremes can wholes which subsist prior to parts, be arranged together with parts, unless there is the same analogy of them in the intermediate natures?

But if each of the spheres is an animal, and is always established after the same manner, and gives completion to the universe, as possessing life indeed, it will always primarily participate of soul, but as preserving its own order immutable in the world, it will be comprehended by

† The sense requires that *θειου* should be here supplied.

intellect, and as one and a whole, and the leader and ruler of its proper parts, it will be illuminated by divine union. Not only the universe, therefore, but each also of its perpetual parts is animated and endued with intellect, and as much as possible is similar to the universe.† For each of these parts is a universe with respect to its kindred multitude. In short, there is indeed one corporeal-formed wholeness of the universe, but there are many others under this, depending on this one; there is one soul of the universe, and after this, other souls, together with this disposing in an orderly manner the whole parts of the universe with undefiled purity; one intellect, and an intellectual number under this, participated by these souls; and one god who connectedly contains at once all mundane and supermundane‡ natures, and a multitude of other gods, who distribute intellectual essences, and the souls suspended from these, and all the parts of the world. For it is not to be supposed that each of the productions of nature is generative of things similar to itself, but that wholes and the first of mundane beings should not in a much greater degree extend in themselves the paradigm of a generation of this kind. For the similar is more allied, and more naturally adapted to the reason of cause than the dissimilar, in the same manner as the same than the different, and bound than the infinite. These things, however, we shall accurately survey in what follows. But we shall now direct our attention to the second of the things demonstrated in the *Laws*, *viz.* that the Gods providentially attend at once to wholes and parts, and shall summarily discuss the irreprehensible conception of Plato about the providence of the Gods.

CHAPTER XIV

From what has been said, therefore, it is evident to every one, that the Gods being the causes of all motion, some of them are essential and vivific, according to a self-motive, self-vital, and self-energetic power. But others of them are intellectual, and excite by their very being all secondary§ natures to the perfection of life, according to the fountain and principle of all second and third progressions of motion. And

† Instead of *ομοιου μη κατα δυναμιν*, it is necessary to read *και κατα δυναμιν τω παντι ομοιον*, as both the sense of the whole sentence and the version of Portus require.

‡ It seems requisite to supply here the word *υπερκοσμων* as in the translation.

§ For *δευτερον* read *δευτερα*.

others are unical, or characterized by unity, deifying by participation all the whole genera of themselves, according to a primary, all-perfect, and unknown power of energy, and who are the leaders of one kind of motion, but are not the principle of another. But again others supply to secondary natures motion according to place or quality, but are essentially the causes of motion to themselves. For every thing which is the cause of essence to other things is much prior to this the cause to itself of its own proper energies and perfection. Farther still, that which is self-motive is again the principle of motion, and being and life are imparted by soul to every thing in the world, and not local motion only and the other kinds of motion, but the progression into being is from soul, and by a much greater priority from an intellectual essence, which binds to itself the life of self-motive natures and precedes according to cause all temporaral energy. And in a still greater degree do motion, being, and life proceed from a unical hyparxis, which connectedly contains intellect and soul, is the source of total good, and proceeds as far as to the last of things. For of life indeed, not all the parts of the world are capable of participating, nor of intellect and a gnostic power; but of *The One* all things participate, as far as to matter itself, both wholes and parts, things which subsist according to nature, and the contraries to these; and there is not any thing which is deprived of a cause of this kind, nor can any thing ever participate of being, if it is deprived of *The One*. If, therefore, the Gods produce all things, and contain all things, in the unknown comprehensions of themselves, how is it possible there should not be a providence of all things in these comprehensions, pervading supernally as far as to the most partial natures? For it is every where fit that offspring should enjoy the providential care of their causes. But all alter-motive are the progeny of self-motive natures. And things which subsist in time, either in the whole of time, or in a part of it, are the effects of eternal natures; because that which always is, is the cause of that which sometimes exists. And divine and unical genera, as they give subsistence to all multiplied natures, precede them in existence. In short, there is no essence, or multitude of powers, which is not allotted its generation from *The One*. It is necessary, therefore, that all these should be partakers of the providence of preceding causes, being vivified indeed from the psychical gods, and circulating according to temporal periods; and participating of sameness and at the same time a stable condition of forms from the intellectual gods;† but receiving into themselves the

† It is necessary here to supply the words, εκ των νοερων θεων.

presence of union, of measure, and of the distribution of good from the first Gods. It is necessary, therefore, either that the Gods should know that a providential care of their own offspring is natural to them, and should not only give subsistence to secondary beings, and supply them with life, essence and union, but also previously comprehend in themselves the primary cause of the goods they contain, or, which it is not lawful to assert, that being Gods, they are ignorant of what is proper and fit.

For what ignorance can there be of beautiful things, with those who are the causes of beauty, or of things good, with those who are allotted an hyparxis defined by the nature of *The Good*? But if they are ignorant, neither do souls govern the universe according to intellect, nor are intellects carried in souls as in a vehicle, nor prior to these do the unities of the Gods contractedly comprehend in themselves all knowledge, which we have acknowledged they do through the former demonstrations. If, therefore, they are not deprived of knowledge, being the fathers, leaders and governors of every thing in the world, and† to them as being such a providential care of the things governed by, and following them, and generated by them, pertains, whether shall we say that they knowing the law which is according to nature, accomplish this law, or that through imbecility they are deprived of a providential attention to their possessions or progeny, for it is of no consequence as to the present discussion which of these two appellations you are willing to adopt? For if through want of power they neglect the superintendence of wholes, what is the cause of this want of power? For they do not move things externally, nor are other things indeed the causes of essence, but they assume the government of the things they have produced, but they rule over all things as if from the stern of a ship, themselves supplying being, themselves containing the measures of life, and themselves distributing to things their respective energies.

Whether also, are they unable to provide at once for all things, or they do not leave each of the parts destitute of their providential care? And if they are not curators of every thing in the world, whether do they providentially superintend greater things, but neglect such as are less? Or do they pay attention to the less, but neglect to take care of the greater? For if we deprive them of a providential attention to all things similarly, through the want of power, how, while we attribute to them a greater thing, *viz.* the production of all things, can we refuse to grant that which is naturally consequent to this, a providential attention to

† και is omitted in the original.

their productions? For it is the province of the power which produces a greater thing, to dispose in a becoming manner that which is less. But if they are curators of less things, and neglect such as are greater, how can this mode of providence be right? For that which is more allied, and more similar to any thing, is more appropriately and fitly disposed by nature to the participation of the good which that thing confers on it. If, however, the Gods think that the first of mundane natures deserve their providential care, and that perfection of which they are the sources, but are unable to extend their regard to the last of things, what is it which can restrain the presence of the Gods from pervading all things? What is it which can impede their unenvying and exuberant energy? How can those who are capable of effecting greater things, be unable to govern such as are less? Or how can those who produce the essence even of the smallest things, not be the lords of the perfection of them, through a privation of power? For all these things are hostile to our natural conceptions. It remains, therefore, that the Gods must know what is fit and appropriate, and that they must possess a power adapted to the perfection of their own nature, and to the government of the whole of things. But if they know that which is according to nature, and this to those who are the generating causes of all things is to take care of all things, and an exuberance of power, - if, this be the case, they are not deprived of a providential attention of this kind. Whether, also, together with what has been said, is there a will of providence in them? Or is this alone wanting both to their knowledge and power? And on this account are things deprived† of their providential care? For if indeed knowing what is fit for themselves, and being able to accomplish what they know, they are unwilling to provide for their own offspring, they will be indigent of goodness, their unenvying exuberance will perish, and we shall do nothing else than abolish the hyparxis according to which they are essentialized. For the very being of the Gods is defined by the good, and in this they have their subsistence. But to provide for things of a subject nature, is to confer on them a certain good. How, therefore, can we deprive the Gods of providence, without at the same time depriving them of goodness? And how if we subvert their goodness is it possible, that we should not also ignorantly subvert their hyparxis which we established by the former demonstrations? Hence it is necessary to admit as a thing consequent to the very being of the Gods that they are good according to every virtue. And again, it is consequent to this that they do not

† For *απηωρηνται* it is requisite to read, *παρηρηται*.

withdraw themselves from a providential attention to secondary natures, either through indolence, or imbecility, or ignorance. But to this I think it is also consequent that there is with them the most excellent knowledge, unpolluted power, and unenvying and exuberant will. From which it appears that they provide for the whole of things, and omit nothing which is requisite to the supply of good.

Let, however, no one think that the Gods extend such a providence about secondary things, as is either of a busy or laborious nature, or that this is the case with their exempt transcendency, which is established remote from mortal difficulty. For their blessedness is not willing to be defiled with the difficulty of administration, since even the life of good men is accompanied with facility, and is void of molestation and pain. But all labours and molestation arise from the impediments of matter. If, however, it be requisite to define the mode of the providence of the Gods, it must be admitted that it is spontaneous, unpolluted, immaterial, and ineffable. For the Gods do not govern all things either by investigating what is fit, or exploring the good of every thing by ambiguous reasonings, or by looking externally, and following their effects as men do in the providence which they exert on their own affairs; but pre-assuming in themselves the measures of the whole of things, and producing the essence of every thing from themselves, and also looking to themselves, they lead and perfect all things in a silent path, by their very being, and fill them with good. Neither, likewise, do they produce in a manner similar to nature, energizing only by their very being, unaccompanied with deliberate choice, nor energizing in a manner similar to partial souls in conjunction with will, are they deprived of production according to essence; but they contract both these into one union, and they will indeed such things as they are able to effect by their very being, but by their very essence being capable of and producing all things, they contain the cause of production in their unenvying and exuberant will. By what busy energy, therefore, with what difficulty, or with the punishment of what Ixion, is the providence either of whole souls, or of intellectual essences, or of the Gods themselves accomplished, unless it should be said, that to impart good in any respect is laborious to the Gods? But that which is according to nature is not laborious to any thing. For neither is it laborious to fire to impart heat, nor to snow to refrigerate, nor in short to bodies to energize according to their own proper powers. And prior to bodies, neither is it laborious to natures to nourish, or generate, or increase. For these are the works of natures. Nor again, prior to these, is it laborious to souls. For these indeed produce many energies from

deliberate choice, many from their very being, and are the causes of many motions by alone being present. So that if indeed the communication of good is according to nature to the Gods, providence also is according to nature. And these things we must say are accomplished by the Gods with facility, and by their very being alone. But if these things are not according to nature, neither will the Gods be naturally good. For the good is the supplier of good; just as life is the source of another life, and intellect is the source of intellectual illumination. And every thing which has a primary subsistence in each nature is generative of that which has a secondary subsistence.

That however, which is especially the illustrious prerogative of the Platonic theology, I should say is this, that according to it, neither is the exempt essence of the Gods converted to secondary natures, through a providential care for things subordinate, nor is their providential presence with all things diminished through their transcending the whole of things with undefiled purity, but at the same time it assigns to them a separate subsistence, and the being unmingled with every subordinate nature, and also the being extended to all things, and the taking care of and adorning their own progeny. For the manner in which they pervade through all things is not corporeal, as that of light is through the air, nor is it divisible about bodies, in the same manner as in nature, nor converted to subordinate natures, in the same manner as that of a partial soul, but it is separate from body, and without conversion to it, is immaterial, unmingled, unrestrained, uniform, primary and exempt. In short, such a mode of the providence of the Gods as this, must at present be conceived. For it is evident that it will be appropriate according to each order of the Gods. For soul indeed, is said to provide for secondary natures in one way, and intellect in another. But the providence of divinity who is prior to intellect is exerted according to a transcendency both of intellect and soul. And of the Gods themselves, the providence of the sublunary is different from that of the celestial divinities. Of the Gods also who are beyond the world, there are many orders, and the mode of providence is different according to each.

CHAPTER XV

The third problem after these we shall connect with the former, and survey how we are to assume the unpervertible in the Gods, who perform all things according to justice, and who do not in the smallest degree subvert its boundary, or its undeviating rectitude, in their providential attention to all other things, and in the mutations of human affairs. I think therefore, that this is apparent to every one, that every where that which governs according to nature, and pays all possible attention to the felicity of the governed, after this manner becomes the leader of that which it governs, and directs it to that which is best. For neither has the pilot who rules over the sailors and the ship any other precedaneous end than the safety of those that sail in the ship, and of the ship itself, nor does the physician who is the curator of the diseased, endeavour to do all things for the sake of any thing else than the health of the subjects of his care, whether it be requisite to cut them, or administer to them a purgative medicine. Nor would the general of an army or a guardian say that they look to any other end, than the one to the liberty of those that are guarded, and the other to the liberty of the soldiers. Nor will any other to whom it belongs to be the leader or curator of certain persons, endeavour to subvert the good of those that follow him, which it is his business to procure, and with a view to which he disposes in a becoming manner every thing belonging to those whom he governs. If therefore we grant that the Gods are the leaders of the whole of things, and that their providence extends to all things, since they are good, and possess every virtue, how is it possible they should neglect the felicity of the objects of their providential care? Or how can they be inferior to other leaders in the providence of subordinate natures? Since the Gods indeed always look to that which is better, and establish this as the end of all their government, but other leaders overlook the good of men, and embrace vice rather than virtue, in consequence of being perverted by the gifts of the depraved.

And universally, whether you are willing to call the Gods leaders, or rulers, or guardians, or fathers, a divine nature will appear to be in want of no one of such names. For all things that are venerable and honourable subsist in them primarily. And on this account indeed, here also some things are naturally more venerable and honourable than others, because they exhibit an ultimate resemblance of the Gods. But what occasion is there to speak further on this subject? For I think that we hear from those who are wise in divine concerns paternal, guardian, ruling and pæonian powers celebrated. How is it possible therefore that

the images of the Gods which subsist according to nature, regarding the end which is adapted to them, should providentially attend to the order of the things which they govern, but that the Gods themselves with whom there is the whole of good, true and real virtue, and a blameless life, should not direct their government to the virtue and vice of men? And how can it be admitted, on this supposition, that they exhibit virtue victorious in the universe, and vice vanquished? Will they not also thus corrupt the measures of justice by the worship paid to them by the depraved, subvert the boundary of undeviating science, and cause the gifts of vice to appear more honourable than the pursuits of virtue? For this mode of providence is neither advantageous to these leaders, nor to those that follow them. For to those who have become wicked, there will be no liberation from guilt, since they will always endeavour to anticipate justice, and pervert the measures of desert. But it will be necessary, which it is not lawful to assert, that the Gods should regard as their final end the vice of the subjects of their providence, neglect their true salvation, and consequently be alone the causes of adumbrant good. This universe also and the whole world will be filled with disorder and incurable perturbation, depravity remaining in it, and being replete with that discord which exists in badly governed cities. Though is it not perfectly impossible that parts should be governed according to nature in a greater degree than wholes, human than divine concerns, and images than primary causes?

Hence if men properly attend to the welfare of men in governing them, honouring some, but disgracing others, and every where giving a proper direction to the works of vice by the measure of virtue, it is much more necessary that the Gods should be the immutable governors of the whole of things. For men are allotted this virtue through similitude to the Gods. But if we acknowledge that men who corrupt the safety and well-being of those whom they govern, imitate in a greater degree the providence of the Gods, we shall ignorantly at one and the same time entirely subvert the truth concerning the Gods, and the transcendency of virtue. For this I think is evident to every one, that what is more similar to the Gods is more happy than those things that are deprived of them† through dissimilitude and diversity. So that if among men indeed, the uncorrupted and undeviating form of providence is honourable, it must undoubtedly be in a much greater degree honourable with the Gods. But if with them, mortal gifts are more venerable than the divine measures of justice, with men also earth-

† For *αυτου* it is necessary to read *αυτων*.

born gifts will be more honourable than Olympian goods, and the blandishments of vice than the works of virtue. With a view therefore to the most perfect felicity, Plato in the *Laws* delivers to us through these demonstrations, the hyparxis of the Gods, their providential care extending to all things, and their immutable energy; which things, indeed, are common to all the Gods, but are most principal and first according to nature in the doctrine pertaining to them. For this triad appears to pervade as far as to the most partial natures in the divine orders, originating supernally from the occult genera of Gods. For a uniform hyparxis, a power which providentially takes care of all secondary natures, and an undeviating and immutable intellect, are in all the Gods that are prior to and in the world.

CHAPTER XVI

Again, from another principle we may be able to apprehend the theological demonstrations in the *Republic*. For these are common to all the divine orders, similarly extend to all the discussion about the Gods, and unfold to us truth in uninterrupted connexion with what has been before said. In the second book of the *Republic* therefore, Socrates describes certain theological types for mythological poets, and exhorts his pupils to purify themselves from those tragic disciplines, which some do not refuse to introduce to a divine nature, concealing in these as in veils the arcane mysteries concerning the Gods. Socrates therefore, as I have said, narrating the types and laws of divine fables, which afford this apparent meaning, and the inward concealed scope, which regards as its end the beautiful and the natural in the fictions about the Gods, - in the first place indeed, thinks fit to evince, according to our unperverted conception about the Gods and their goodness, that they are the suppliers of all good, but the causes of no evil to any being at any time. In the second place, he says that they are essentially immutable, and that they neither have various forms, deceiving and fascinating, nor are the authors of the greatest evil lying, in deeds or in words, or of error and folly. These therefore being two laws, the former has two conclusions, *viz.* that the Gods are not the causes of evils, and that they are the causes of all good. The second law also in a similar manner has two other conclusions; and these are, that every divine nature is immutable, and is established pure from falsehood and artificial variety. All the things demonstrated therefore, depend on these three common conceptions about a divine nature, *viz.* on the conceptions about its goodness, immutability and truth. For the first and ineffable fountain

of good is with the Gods; together with eternity, which is the cause of a power that has an invariable sameness of subsistence; and the first intellect which is beings themselves, and the truth which is in real beings.

CHAPTER XVII

That therefore, which has the hyparxis of itself, and the whole of its essence defined in the good, and which by its very being produces all things, must necessarily be productive of every good, but of no evil. For if there was any thing primarily good, which is not God, perhaps some one might say that divinity is indeed a cause of good, but that he does not impart to beings every good. If, however, not only every God is good, but that which is primarily boniform and beneficent is God, (for that which is primarily good will not be the second after the Gods, because every where, things which have a secondary subsistence, receive the peculiarity of their hyparxis from those that subsist primarily) - this being the case, it is perfectly necessary that divinity should be the cause of good, and of all such goods as proceed into secondary descents, as far as to the last of things. For as the power which is the cause of life, gives subsistence to all life, as the power which is the cause of knowledge, produces all knowledge, as the power which is the cause of beauty, produces every thing beautiful, as well the beauty which is in words, as that which is in the phænomena, and thus every primary cause produces all similars from itself and binds to itself the one hypostasis of things which subsist according to one form, - after the same manner I think the first and most principal good, and uniform hyparxis, establishes in and about itself, the causes and comprehensions of all goods at once. Nor is there any thing good which does not possess this power from it, nor beneficent which being converted to it, does not participate of this cause. For all goods are from thence produced, perfected and preserved; and the one series and order of universal good, depends on that fountain. Through the same cause of hyparxis therefore, the Gods are the suppliers of all good, and of no evil. For that which is primarily good, gives subsistence to every good from itself, and is not the cause of an allotment contrary to itself; since that which is productive of life, is not the cause of the privation of life, and that which is the source of beauty is exempt from the nature of that which is void of beauty and is deformed, and from the causes of this. Hence, of that which primarily constitutes good, it is not lawful to assert that it is the cause of contrary

progeny; but the nature of goods proceeds from thence undefiled, unmingled and uniform.

And the divine cause indeed of goods is established eternally in itself, extending to all secondary natures, an unenvying and exuberant participation of good. Of its participants, however, some preserve the participation with incorruptible purity, receiving their proper good in undefiled bosoms, and thus through an abundance of power possess inevitably an allotment of goods adapted to them. But those natures which are arranged in the last of the whole of things, entirely indeed enjoy according to their nature the goodness of the Gods; for it is not possible that things perfectly destitute of good should either have a being, or subsist at first; but receiving an efflux of this kind, they neither preserve the gift which pervades to them, pure and unmingled, nor do they retain their proper good stably, and with invariable sameness, but becoming imbecil, partial and material, and filled with the privation of vitality of their subject, they exhibit to order indeed, the privation of order, to reason irrationality, and to virtue, the contrary to it, vice. And with respect indeed to the natures which rank as wholes,† each of these is exempt from a perversion of this kind, things more perfect in them always having dominion according to nature. But partial natures through a diminution of power always diverging‡ into multitude, division and interval, obscure indeed the participation of good, but substitute the contrary in the mixture with good, and which is vanquished by the combination. For neither here is it lawful for evil to subsist unmingled, and perfectly destitute of good; but though some particular thing may be evil to a part, yet it is entirely good to the whole and to the universe. For the universe is always happy, and always consists of perfect parts, and which subsist according to nature. But that which is preternatural is always evil to partial natures, and deformity, privation of symmetry, perversion, and a resemblance of subsistence are in these. For its proper perfection, but to the universe it is incorruptible and indestructible.

And every thing which is deprived of good, so far indeed as pertains to itself, and its own subsistence, is deprived of it through imbecility of nature; but it is good to the whole, and so far as it is a part of the universe. For it is not possible that either a privation of life, or deformity and immoderation, or in short privation can be inserted in the

† For αλλων it is necessary to read, ολων.

‡ For εμβαινοντα read εκβαινοντα.

universe; but its whole number is always perfect, being held together by the goodness of wholes. And life is every where present, together with existence, and the being perfect, so far as each thing gives completion to the whole. Divinity therefore, as we have said, is the cause† of good; but the shadowy subsistence of evil does not subsist from power, but from the imbecility of the natures which receive the illuminations of the Gods. Nor is evil in wholes, but in partial natures, nor yet in all these. For the first of partial natures and partial intellectual genera are eternally boniform. But the media among these, and which energize according to time, connecting the participation of the good with temporal mutation and motion, are incapable of preserving the gift of the Gods immoveable, uniform and simple; by their variety obscuring‡ the simplicity of this gift, by their multiform its uniform nature, and by their commixture its purity and incorruptibility. For they do not consist of incorruptible first genera, nor have they a simple essence, nor uniform powers, but such as are composed of the contraries to these, as Socrates somewhere says in the *Phædrus*. And the last of partial natures and which are also material, in a much greater degree pervert their proper good. For they are mingled with a privation of life, and have a subsistence resembling that of an image, since it is replete with much of non-entity, consists of things hostile to each other, and of circumstances which are mutable and dispersed through the whole of time, so that they never cease to evince in every thing that they are given up to corruption, privation of symmetry, deformity, and all-various mutations, being not only extended in their energies, like the natures prior to them, but being replete both in their powers and energies with that which is preternatural, and with material imbecility. For things which become situated in a foreign place, by co-introducing whole together with form, rule over the subject nature; but again receding to that which is partial, from their proper wholeness, and participating of partibility, imbecility, war and the division which is the source of generation, they are necessarily all-variously changed. Neither, therefore, is every being perfectly good; for there would not be the corruption and generation of bodies, nor the purification and punishment of souls. Nor is there any evil in wholes: for the world would not be a blessed god, if the most principal parts of which it consists were imperfect. Nor are the Gods the causes of evils, in the same manner as they are of goods; but evil

† It is necessary here to supply the word αιτιον.

‡ For παρασκευαζοντα it is requisite to read περισκιαζοντα.

originates from the imbecility of the recipients of good, and a subsistence in the last of things. Nor is the evil which has a shadowy subsistence in partial natures unmingled with good. But this participates of it in a certain respect, by its very existence being detained by good. Nor in short, is it possible for evil which is perfectly destitute of all good to have a subsistence. For evil itself is even beyond that which in no respect whatever has an existence, just as the good itself is beyond that which is perfectly being. Nor is the evil which is in partial natures left in a disordered state, but even this is made subservient to good purposes by the Gods, and on this account justice purifies souls from depravity. But another order of gods purifies from the depravity which is in bodies. All things however are converted as much as possible to the goodness of the Gods. And wholes indeed remain in their proper boundaries, and also the perfect and beneficent genera of beings. But more partial and imperfect natures are adorned and arranged in a becoming manner, become subservient to the completion of wholes, are called upward to the beautiful, are changed, and in every way enjoy the participation of the good, so far as this can be accomplished by them.

For there cannot be a greater good to each of these, than what the Gods impart according to measures to their progeny: But all things, each separately, and all in common, receive such a portion of good, as it is possible for them to participate. But if some things are filled with greater, and others with less goods, the power of the recipients, and the measures of the distribution must be assigned as the cause of this. For different things are adapted to different beings according to their nature. But the Gods always extend good, in the same manner as the sun always emits light. For a different thing receives this light differently according to its order, and receives the greatest portion of light it is capable of receiving. For all things are led according to justice, and good is not absent from any thing, but is present to every thing, according to an appropriate boundary of participation. And as the Athenian guest says, all things are in a good condition, and are arranged by the Gods. Let no one therefore say, that there are precedaneous productive principles of evil in nature, or intellectual paradigms of evils, in the same manner as there are of goods, or that there is a malefic soul, or an evil-producing cause in the Gods, nor let him introduce sedition and eternal war against the first good. For all these are foreign from the science of Plato, and being more remote from the truth wander into barbaric folly, and gigantic mythology. Nor if certain persons speaking obscurely in arcane narrations, devise things of this kind, shall we make any alteration in the apparent apparatus of what they indicate. But the truth indeed of those

things is to be investigated, and in the mean time, the science of Plato must be genuinely received in the pure bosoms of the soul, and must be preserved undefiled and unmingled with contrary opinions.

CHAPTER XVIII

In the next place, let us survey the immutability and simplicity of the Gods, what the nature of each of them is, and how both these appear to be adapted to the hyparxis of the Gods, according to the narration of Plato. The Gods, therefore, are exempt from the whole of things. But filling these, as we have said, with good, they are themselves perfectly good; each of them according to his proper order possesses that which is most excellent; and the whole genus of the Gods is at once allotted predominance according to an exuberance of good. But here again, we must oppose those who interpret in a divisible manner that which is most excellent in the Gods, and who say, that if the first cause is most excellent, that which is posterior to the first is not so. For it is necessary, say they, that what is produced should be inferior to that by which it is produced. And this indeed is rightly asserted by them. For it is necessary in the Gods, to preserve the order of causes unconfused, and to define separately their second and third progressions. But together with a progression of this kind, and with† the unfolding into light of things secondary from those that are first, that which is most excellent must also be surveyed in each of the Gods. For each of the Gods in his own characteristic peculiarity is allotted a transcendency which is primary and perfectly good. One of them indeed, that we may speak of something known, is allotted this transcendency, and is most excellent as possessing a prophetic power, another as demiurgic, but another as a perfector of works. And Timæus indicating this to us, continually calls the first demiurgus the best of causes. For the world, says he, is the most beautiful of generated natures, and its artificer is the best of causes; though the intelligible paradigm, and which is the most beautiful of intelligibles is prior to the demiurgus. But this is most beautiful and at the same time most excellent, as the demiurgic paradigm; and the maker and at the same time father of the universe is most excellent, as a demiurgic God. In the *Republic* also, Socrates speaking of the Gods, very properly observes, that each of them being as much as possible most beautiful and most excellent, remains always with a simplicity of subsistence in his own form. For each of them

† For το it is necessary to read τῃ.

being allotted that which is first and the summit in his own series, does not depart from his own order, but contains the blessedness and felicity of his own proper power. And neither does he exchange his present for a worse order; for it is not lawful for that which possesses all virtue to be changed into a worse condition; not does he pass into a better order. For where can there be any thing better than that which is most excellent? But this is present with each of the divinities according to his own order, as we have said, and also with every genus of the Gods.

It is necessary therefore that every divine nature should be established immutably, abiding in its own accustomed manner. Hence from these things the self-sufficiency, undefiled purity, and invariable sameness of subsistence of the Gods is apparent. For if they are not changed to a more excellent condition of being, as possessing that which is best in their own nature, they are sufficient to themselves, and are not in want of any good. And if they are not at any time changed to a worse condition, they remain undefiled, established in their own transcendencies. If also they guard the perfection of themselves immutably, they subsist always with invariable sameness. What the self-sufficiency therefore of the Gods is, what their immutability, and what their sameness of subsistence, we shall in the next place consider.

The world then is said to be self-sufficient, because its subsistence is perfect from things perfect, and a whole from wholes; and because it is filled with all appropriate goods from its generating father. But a perfection and self-sufficiency of this kind is partible, and is said to consist of many things coalescing in one, and is filled from separate causes according to participation. The order of divine souls also, is said to be self-sufficient, as being full of appropriate virtues, and always preserving the measure of its own blessedness without indigence. But here likewise the self-sufficiency is in want of powers. For these souls have not their intellections directed to the same intelligibles; but they energize according to time, and obtain the complete perfection of their contemplation in whole periods of time. The self-sufficiency therefore of divine souls, and the whole perfection of their life is not at once present. Again, the intellectual world is said to be self-sufficient, as having its whole good established in eternity, comprehending at once its whole blessedness, and being indigent of nothing, because all life and all intelligence are present with it, and nothing is deficient, nor does it desire any thing as absent. But this, indeed, is sufficient to itself in its own order, yet it falls short of the self-sufficiency of the Gods. For every intellect is boniform, yet is not goodness itself, nor primarily good; but each of the Gods is a unity, hyparxis and goodness. The

peculiarity however of hyparxis changes the progression of the goodness of each. For one divinity is a perfective goodness, another is a goodness connective of the whole of things, and another is a collective goodness. But each is simply a goodness sufficient to itself. Or it may be said, that each is a goodness possessing the self-sufficient and the all-perfect, neither according to participation, nor illumination, but by being that very thing which it is. For intellect is sufficient to itself by participation, and soul by illumination, but this universe, according to a similitude to a divine nature. The Gods themselves, however, are self-sufficient through and by themselves, filling themselves, or rather subsisting as the plenitudes of all good.

But with respect to the immutability of the Gods, of what kind shall we say it is? Is it such as that of a [naturally] circulating body? For neither is this adapted to receive any thing from inferior natures, nor is it filled with the mutation arising from generation, and the disorder which occurs in the sublunary regions. For the nature of the celestial bodies is immaterial and immutable. But this indeed is great and venerable, as in corporeal hypostases, yet it is inferior to the nature of the Gods. For every body possesses both its being, and its perpetual immutability from other precedaneous causes. But neither is the impassive and the immutable in the Gods such as the immutability of souls. For these communicate in a certain respect with bodies, and are the media of an impartible essence, and of an essence divided about bodies. Nor again is the immutability of intellectual essences equivalent to that of the Gods. For intellect is immutable, impassive, and unmingled with secondary natures, on account of its union with the Gods. And so far indeed as it is uniform, it is a thing of this kind; but so far as it is manifold, it has something which is more excellent, and something which is subordinate, in itself. But the Gods alone having established their unions according to this transcendency of beings, are immutable dominations, are primary and impassive. For there is nothing in them which is not one and hyparxis. But as fire abolishes every thing which is foreign to it and of a contrary power, as light expels all darkness, and as lightning proceeds through all things without defilement, thus also the unities of the Gods unite all multitude, and abolish every thing which tends to dispersion and all-perfect division. But they deify every thing which participates of them, receiving nothing from their participants, and do not[†] diminish their own proper union by the participation.

[†] ουχ is omitted in the original.

Hence also the Gods being present every where, are similarly exempt from all things, and containing all things are vanquished by no one of the things they contain; but they are unmingled with all things and undefiled. In the third place, this world indeed is said to subsist with invariable sameness, so far as it is allotted an order in itself which is always preserved indissoluble. At the same time however, since it possesses a corporeal form, it is not destitute of mutation, as the Elean guest observes. The psychical order likewise is said to obtain an essence always established in sameness; and this is rightly said. For it is entirely impassive according to essence; but it has energies extended into time, and as Socrates says in the *Phædrus*, at different times it understands different intelligibles, and in its progressions about intellect comes into contact with different forms. Besides these also, much-honoured intellect is said both to subsist and to understand with invariable and perpetual sameness, establishing at once in eternity its essence, powers, and energies. Through the multitude however of its intellections, and through the variety of intelligible species and genera, there is not only an invariable sameness, but also a difference of subsistence in intellect. For difference there is consubsistent with sameness. And there is not only a wandering of corporeal motions, and of the psychical periods, but likewise of intellect itself, so far as it produces the intelligence of itself into multitude; and evolves the intelligible. For soul indeed evolves intellect, but intellect the intelligible, as Plotinus somewhere rightly observes, when speaking of the intelligible subjections. For such are the wanderings of intellect and which it is lawful for it to make. If therefore we should say that a perpetual sameness of subsistence is primarily in the Gods alone, and is especially inherent in them, we shall not deviate from the truth, and we shall accord with Plato, who says in the *Politicus*, that an eternally invariable sameness of subsistence alone pertains to the most divine of all things. The Gods, therefore, bind to themselves the causes of a sameness of this kind, and guard with immutable sameness their proper hyparxis established according to the unknown union of themselves. And such is the immutability of the Gods, which is contained in self-sufficiency, impassivity and sameness.

CHAPTER XIX

In the next place, let us consider what power the simplicity of the Gods possesses; for this Socrates adds in his discourse concerning a divine nature, not admitting that which is various, and multiform, and which appears different at different times, but referring to divinity the

uniform and the simple. Each of the divinities therefore, as he says, remains simply in his own form. What then shall we conclude respecting this simplicity? That it is not such as that which is defined to be one in number. For a thing of this kind is composed of many things, and abundantly mingled. But it appears to be simple so far as it has distinctly a common form. Nor is it such as the simplicity which is in many things according to an arranged species or genus. For these are indeed more simple than the individuals in which they are inherent, but are replete with variety, communicate with matter, and receive the diversities of material natures. Nor is it such as the form of nature. For nature is divided about bodies, verges to corporeal masses, emits many powers about the composition subject to it, and is indeed more simple than bodies, but has an essence mingled with their variety. Nor is it such as the psychical simplicity. For soul subsisting as a medium between an impartible essence, and an essence which is divided about bodies, communicates with both the extremes. And by that which is multiform indeed in its nature it is conjoined with things subordinate, but its head is established on high, and according to this it is especially divine, and allied to intellect.

Nor again is the simplicity of the Gods such as that of intellect. For every intellect is impartible and uniform, but at the same time it possesses multitude and progression; by which it is evident that it has a habitude to secondary natures, to itself, and about itself. It is also in itself, and is not only uniform, but also multiform, and as it is said, is one many. It is therefore allotted an essence subordinate to the first simplicity. But the Gods have their hyparxis defined in one simplicity alone, being exempt indeed from all multitude so far as they are gods, and transcending all division and interval, or habitude to secondary natures, and all composition. And they indeed are in inaccessible places, expanded above the whole of things, and eternally ride on beings. But the illuminations proceeding from them to secondary natures, being mingled in many places with their participants which are composite and various, are filled with a peculiarity similar to them. Let no one therefore wonder, if the Gods being essentialized in one simplicity according to transcendency, various phantasms are hurled forth before the presence of them; nor, if they being uniform the appearances are multiform, as we have learnt in the most perfect of the mysteries. For nature, and the demiurgic intellect extend corporeal-formed images of things incorporeal, sensible images of intelligible, and of things without interval, images endued with interval. For Socrates also in the *Phædrus* indicating things of this kind, and evincing that the mysteries into which

souls without bodies are initiated are most blessed, and truly perfect, says, that they are initiated into entire, simple and immoveable visions, such souls becoming situated there, and united with the Gods themselves, but not meeting with the resemblances which are emitted from the Gods into these sublunary realms. For these are more partial and composite, and present themselves to the view attended with motion. But illuminated, uniform, simple, and, as Socrates says, immoveable spectacles exhibit themselves to the attendants of the Gods, and to souls that abandon the abundant tumult of generation, and who ascend to divinity pure and divested of the garments of mortality. And thus much is concluded by us respecting the simplicity of the Gods. For it is necessary that the nature which generates things multiform should be simple† and should precede what is generated, in the same manner as the uniform precedes the multiplied. If, therefore, the Gods are the causes of all composition, and produce from themselves the variety of beings, it is certainly necessary that *The One* of their nature which is generative of the whole of things, should have its subsistence in simplicity. For as incorporeal causes precede bodies, immoveable causes things that are moved, and impartible causes all partible natures, after the same manner uniform intellectual powers precede multiform natures, unmingled powers, things that are mingled together, and simple powers, things of a variegated nature.

CHAPTER XX

In the next place, let us speak concerning the truth which is in the Gods; for this in addition to what has been said is concluded by Socrates, because a divine nature is without falsehood, and is neither the cause of deception or ignorance to us, or to any other beings. We must understand therefore, that divine truth is exempt from the truth which consists in words, so far as this truth is composite, and in a certain respect is mingled with its contrary, and because its subsistence consists of things that are not true. For the first parts do not admit of a truth of this kind, unless some one being persuaded by what Socrates asserts in the *Cratylus*, should say that these also are after another manner true. Divine truth also is exempt from psychical truth, whether it is surveyed in opinions or in sciences, so far as it is in a certain respect divisible, and is not beings themselves, but is assimilated to and co-harmonized with beings, and as being perfected in motion and mutation falls short of the

† After απλουν in the original, it is requisite to insert ειναι και.

truth which is always firm, stable and of a principal nature. Divine truth is likewise again exempt from intellectual truth, because though this subsists according to essence, and is said to be and is, beings themselves, through the power of sameness, yet again, through difference, it is separated from the essence of them, and preserves its peculiar hypostasis unconfused with respect to them. The truth therefore of the Gods alone, is the undivided union and all-perfect communion of them. And through this the ineffable knowledge of the Gods, surpasses all knowledge, and all secondary forms of knowledge participate of an appropriate perfection. But this knowledge alone of the Gods contractedly comprehends these secondary forms of knowledge, and all beings according to an ineffable union. And through this the Gods know all things at once, wholes and parts, beings and non-beings, things eternal and things temporal, not in the same manner as intellect by the universal knows a part, and by being, non-being, but they know every thing immediately, such things as are common, and such as are particulars, though you should speak of the most absurd of all things, though you should speak of the infinity of contingencies, or even of matter itself.

If, however, you investigate the mode of the knowledge and truth of the Gods, concerning all things that have a subsistence in any respect whatever, it is ineffable and incomprehensible by the projecting energies of the human intellect; but is alone known to the Gods themselves. And I indeed admire those Platonists that attribute to intellect the knowledge of all things, of individuals, of things preternatural, and in short, of evils, and on this account establish intellectual paradigms of these. But I much more admire those who separate the intellectual peculiarity from divine union. For intellect is the first fabrication and progeny of the Gods. These therefore assign to intellect whole and first causes, and such as are according to nature, and to the Gods a power which is capable of adorning and generating all things. For *The One* is every where, but whole is not every where. And of *The One* indeed matter participates and every being; but of intellect and intellectual species and genera, all things do not participate. All things therefore are alone from the Gods, and real truth is with them who know all things unically. For on this account also, in oracles the Gods similarly teach all things, wholes and parts, things eternal, and such as are generated through the whole of time. For being exempt from eternal beings, and from those that exist in time, they contract in themselves the knowledge of each and of all things, according to one united truth. If therefore any falsehood occurs in the oracles of the Gods, we must not say that a

thing of this kind originates from the Gods, but from the recipients, or the instruments, or the places, or the times. For all these contribute to the participation of divine knowledge, and when they are appropriately co-adapted to the Gods, they receive a pure illumination of the truth which is established in them. But when they are separated from the Gods through inaptitude, and become discordant with them, then they obscure the truth which proceeds from them. What kind of falsehood therefore can be said to be derived from the Gods, who produce all the species of knowledge? What deception can there be with those who establish in themselves the whole of truth? In the same manner, as it appears to me, the Gods extend good to all things, but always that which is willing and able receives the extended good, as Socrates says in the *Phædrus*. And a divine nature indeed is causeless of evil, but that which departs from it, and gravitates downwards, is elongated through itself; thus also, the Gods indeed are always the suppliers of truth, but those natures are illuminated by them, who are lawfully their participants. For the Elean wise man says, that the eye of the soul in the multitude, is not strong enough to look to the truth.

The Athenian guest also celebrates this truth which subsists primarily in the Gods; for he says that truth is the leader to the Gods of every good, and likewise of every good to men. For as the truth which is in souls conjoins them with intellect, and as intellectual truth conducts all the intellectual orders to *The One*, thus also the truth of the Gods unites the divine unities to the fountain of all good, with which being conjoined, they are filled with all boniform power. For every where the hyparxis of truth has a cause which is collective of multitude into one; since in the *Republic* also, the light proceeding from *The Good* and which conjoins intellect with the intelligible, is denominated by Plato truth. This characteristic property therefore, which unites and binds together the natures that fill and the natures that are filled, according to all the orders of the Gods, must be arranged as originating supernally and proceeding as far as to the last of things.

CHAPTER XXI

To us however discussing what pertains to every divine nature, what we assert will be known from those commonly received truths adduced in the *Phædrus*, and which we have before mentioned. Socrates therefore says that every thing divine is beautiful, wise, and good† and

† δυνατον is erroneously printed instead of αγαθον.

he indicates that this triad pervades to all the progressions of the Gods. What therefore is the goodness, what the wisdom, and what the beauty of the Gods? With respect to the goodness of the Gods therefore, we have before observed, that it preserves and gives subsistence to the whole of things, that it every where exists as the summit, as that which fills subordinate natures, and as pre-existing in every order analogous to the first principle of the divine orders. For according to this all the Gods are conjoined with the one cause of all things, and on account of this primarily derive their subsistence as Gods. For in all beings there is not any thing more perfect than the good, and the Gods. To tbe most excellent of beings therefore, and which are in every respect perfect, the best and most perfect of things is adapted.

CHAPTER XXII

But in the *Philebus*, Plato delivers to us the three most principal elements of *The Good, viz.* the desirable, the sufficient, and the perfect. For it is necessary that it should convert all things to itself, and fill all things, and that it should be in no respect deficient, and should not diminish its exuberance. Let no one therefore conceive the desirable to be such as that which is frequently extended in sensibles as the object of appetite. For such is apparent beauty. Nor let him suppose it to be such as is indeed able to energize upon and excite to itself the natures which are able to participate it, but which at the same time may be apprehended by intelligence, and is educed by us according to a projecting energy, and an adhesion of the dianoetic power. For it is ineffable, and prior to all knowledge extends to all beings. For all things desire *The Good*, and are converted to it. But if it be requisite summarily to unfold the characteristic peculiarity of the desirable, as the supplier of light proceeds by his rays into secondary natures, converts the eye to himself, causes it to be solar-form, and to resemble himself, and through a different similitude conjoins it with his own fulgid splendour, thus also I think the desirable of the Gods allures and draws upward all things to the Gods in an ineffable manner by its own proper illuminations, being every where present to all things, and not deserting any order whatever of beings. Since even matter itself is said to he extended to this desirable, and through this desire is filled with as many goods as it is able to participate. It is therefore the centre of all beings, and all beings, and all the Gods have their essences, powers and energies about this. And the extension and desire of things towards this is inextinguishable. For all beings aspire after this desirable which is

unknown and incomprehensible. Not being able therefore either to know or receive that which they desire, they dance round it, and are parturient and as it were prophetic with respect to it. But they have an unceasing and never-ending desire of its unknown and ineffable nature, at the same time that they are unable to embrace and embosom it. For being at once exempt from all things, it is similarly present to and moves all things about itself, and is at the same time by all of them incomprehensible. By this motion also and this desire it preserves all things. But by its unknown transcendency through which it surpasses the whole of things, it preserves its proper union unmingled with secondary natures. Such therefore is the desirable.

But the sufficient is full of boniform power, proceeds to all things, and extends to all beings the gifts of the Gods. For we conceive such a sufficiency as this to be a power pervading and protending to the last of things, extending the unenvying and exuberant will of the Gods, and not abiding in itself, but unically comprehending the super-plenitude, the never-failing, the infinite, and that which is generative of good in the divine hyparxis. For the desirable being firmly established, and surpassing the whole of things, and arranging all beings about itself, the sufficient begins the progression and multiplication of all good, calls forth that which is primary in the uniform hyparxis of the desirable, by its own prolific† exuberance, and by the beneficent replenishings which pervade to all things, and copiously produces and imparts it to every being. It is owing to the sufficient therefore, that the stability of divine natures, and that which proceeds from its proper causes is full of goodness, and that, in short, all beings are benefited, abiding in, proceeding from, and being united to their principles, and essentially separated from them. Through this power therefore, the intellectual genera give subsistence to natures similar to themselves, souls desire to generate, and imitate the beings prior to souls, natures deliver their productive principles into another place, and all things possess, in short, the love of generation. For the sufficiency of the goodness of the Gods, proceeding from this goodness, is disseminated in all beings, and moves all things to the unenvying communication of good; intellect indeed to the communication of intellectual, but soul of physical, and nature of natural good.

All things therefore abide through the desirable of goodness, and generate and proceed into second and third generations through the sufficient. But the third thing, the perfect, is convertive of the whole of

† Instead of μονιμῳ it is necessary to read γονιμῳ.

things, and circularly collects them to their causes; and this is accomplished by divine, intellectual, psychical and physical perfection. For all things participate of conversion, since the infinity of progression is through this again recalled to its principles; and the perfect is mingled from the desirable and sufficient. For every thing of this kind is the object of desire, and is generative of things similar to itself. Or in the works of nature also, are not perfect things every where lovely and prolific through the acme of their beauty? The desirable therefore establishes all things, and comprehends them in itself. The sufficient excites them into progressions and generations. And the perfect consummately leads progressions to conversions and convolutions. But through these three causes, the goodness of the Gods fixing the unical power and authority of its proper hypostasis in this triad, is the primary and most principal fountain and vestal seat of things which have any kind of subsistence whatever.

CHAPTER XXIII

After this, wisdom is allotted the second order, being the intelligence of the Gods, or rather the hyparxis of their intelligence. For intelligence indeed, is intellectual knowledge; but the wisdom of the Gods is ineffable knowledge, which is united to the object of knowledge and the intelligible union of the Gods. But it appears to me that Plato especially surveyed this in the triad [of the beautiful, the wise and the good,] as may be inferred from the conceptions scattered about it in many places. I say then that Diotima in the *Banquet* is of opinion that wisdom is full of that which is known, and that it neither seeks, nor investigates, but possesses the intelligible. Hence, she says, that no one of the gods philosophizes, nor desires to become wise; for a God is wise. Hence that which is philosophic is imperfect, and indigent of truth; but that which is wise is full and unindigent, and has every thing present which it wishes and desires nothing. But the desirable and the appetible are proposed to the philosopher. Socrates, however, in the *Republic* considers that which is generative of truth and intellect, as affording an indication of wisdom, to our souls indeed the ascent to divine plenitude being accomplished through knowledge,† but to the Gods intellect being present from the fullness of knowledge.‡ For the progression in them

† For γεννησεως it is requisite to read γνωσεως.

‡ The same emendation is necessary here as above.

is not from an imperfect habit to the perfect; but from a self-perfect hyparxis a power prolific of inferior natures proceeds. But in the *Theætetus* he indicates that the perfective of things imperfect, and that which calls forth concealed intelligence in souls, pertain to wisdom. For he says, it compels me to obstetrication, but prevents me from generating. It is evident therefore, from these things, that the genus of wisdom is triadic. Hence it is full of being and truth, is generative of intellectual truth, and is perfective of intellectual natures that are in energy, and itself possesses a stable power. We must admit therefore, that these things pertain to the wisdom of the Gods. For this wisdom is full indeed of divine goodness, generates divine truth, and perfects all things posterior to itself.

CHAPTER XXIV

In the next place let us consider the beautiful, what it is, and how it primarily subsists in the Gods. It is said therefore to be boniform beauty, and intelligible beauty, to be more ancient than intellectual beauty, and to be beauty itself, and the cause of beauty to all beings; and all such like epithets. And it is rightly said. But it is separate not only from the beauty which is apparent in corporeal masses, from the symmetry which is in these from psychical elegance, and intellectual splendour, but also from the second and third progressions in the Gods; and subsisting in the intelligible place of survey, it proceeds from this to all the genera of the Gods, and illuminates their superessential unities, and all the essences suspended from these unities, as far as to the apparent vehicles of the Gods. As therefore through the first goodness all the Gods are boniform, and through intelligible wisdom they have a knowledge ineffable, and established above intellect, thus also, I think, through the summit of beauty, every thing divine is lovely. For from thence all the Gods derive beauty, and being filled with it, fill the natures posterior to themselves, exciting all things, agitating them with Bacchic fury about the love of themselves, and pouring supernally on all things the divine effluxion of beauty.

Such therefore, in short, is divine beauty, the supplier of divine hilarity, familiarity and friendship. For through this the Gods are united to and rejoice in each other, admire, and are delighted in communicating with each other, and in their mutual replenishings, and do not desert the order which they are always allotted in the distrihutions of themselves. Plato also delivers three indications of this beauty, in the *Banquet* indeed, denominating it the delicate; for the

perfect and that which is most blessed, accedes to the beautiful through the participation of goodness. But he thus speaks of it in that dialogue: That which is truly beautiful, is delicate, perfect and most blessed." One of the indications therefore of the beautiful, is a thing of this kind, *viz.* the delicate. But we may assume another indication of it from the *Phædrus*, *viz.* the splendid. For Plato attributing this to the beautiful says: "It was then that we were permitted to see splendid beauty shining upon us etc." And afterwards he adds: "And arriving hither we apprehended it shining most manifestly through the clearest of the senses." And at last he says: "But now beauty alone has this allotment to be most splendid and most lovely." These two things therefore are to be assumed as indications of beauty. Another indication of beauty is this, that it is the object of love, which now also Plato appears to me to have called most lovely.; And in many other places he shows that the amatory fury is conversant with the beautiful, defining, and in short, suspending love from the monad of beauty. "For love, says he, is conversant with the beautiful."

Because, therefore, beauty converts and moves all things to itself, causes them to energize enthusiastically, and recalls them through love, it is the object of love, being the leader of the whole amatory series walking on the extremities of its feet, and exciting all things to itself through desire and astonishment. But again because it extends to secondary natures plenitudes from itself, in conjunction with hilarity and divine facility, alluring, enflaming, and elevating all things, and pouring on them illuminations from on high, it is delicate, and is said to be so by Plato. And because it bounds this triad, and covers as with a veil the ineffable union of the Gods, swims as it were on the light of forms, causes intelligible light to shine forth, and announces the occult nature of goodness, it is denominated splendid, lucid and manifest. For the goodness of the Gods is supreme and most united; their wisdom is in a certain respect now parturient with intelligible light, and the first forms; but their beauty is established in the highest forms, is the luminous precursor of divine light, and is the first thing that is apparent to ascending souls, being more splendid and more lovely to the view and to embrace than every luciferous essence, and when it appears is received with astonishment. This triad therefore filling all things, and proceeding through all things, it is certainly necessary that the natures which are filled should be converted to and conjoined with each of the three through kindred, and not through the same media. For of different things that are filled by this triad there is a different medium; and different powers are converted to a different perfection of the Gods. I

think therefore, it is manifest to every one, and it is frequently asserted by Plato, that the cause which congregates all secondary natures to divine beauty, which familiarizes them to it and is the source of their being filled with it, and of their derivation from thence, is nothing else than love, which always conjoins according to the beautiful, secondary to the first† Gods, and the more excellent genera, and the best of souls. But again, truth is certainly the leader to, and establishes beings in, divine wisdom, with which intellect being filled, possesses a knowledge of beings, and souls participating of this energize intellectually. For the full participation of true wisdom is effected through truth, since this every where illuminates intellective natures, and conjoins them with the objects of intellection, just as truth also is the first thing that congregates intellect and the intelligible. To those however who hasten to be conjoined with the good, knowledge and co-operation are no longer requisite, but collocation, a firm establishment and quiet are necessary.

CHAPTER XXV

What therefore is it which unites us to the good? What is it which causes in us a cessation of energy and motion. What is it which establishes all divine natures in the first and ineffable unity of goodness. And how does it come to pass that every thing being established in that which is prior to itself according to the good which is in itself again establishes things posterior to itself according to cause? It is, in short, the faith of the Gods, which ineffably unites all the genera of the Gods, of dæmons, and of happy souls to *The Good.* For it is necessary to investigate *The Good* neither gnostically, nor imperfectly, but giving ourselves up to the divine light, and closing the eyes of the soul, after this manner to become established in the unknown and occult unity of beings. For such a kind of faith as this is more ancient than the gnostic energy, not in us only, but with the Gods themselves, and according to this all the Gods are united, and about one centre uniformly collect the whole of their powers and progressions.

If however it be requisite to give a particular definition of this faith, let no one suppose that it is such a kind of faith as that which is conversant with the wandering about sensibles. For this falls short of science, and much more of the truth of beings. But the faith of the Gods surpasses all knowledge, and according to the highest union conjoins secondary with first natures. Nor again, let him conceive a

† Instead of προς αυτον it is requisite to read πρωτιστοις.

faith of a similar species with the celebrated belief in common conceptions; for we believe in common conceptions prior to all reasoning. But the knowledge of these is divisible, and is by no means equivalent to divine union; and the science of these is not only posterior to faith, but also to intellectual simplicity. For intellect is established beyond all science, both the first science, and that which is posterior to it. Neither, therefore, must we say that the energy according to intellect is similar to such a faith as this. For intellectual energy is multiform, and is separated from the objects of intellection through difference; and in short, it is intellectual motion about the intelligible. But it is necessary that divine faith should be uniform and quiet, being perfectly established in the port of goodness. For neither is the beautiful, nor wisdom, nor any thing else among beings, so credible and stable to all things, and so exempt from all ambiguity, divisible apprehension and motion, as *The Good.* For through this intellect also embraces another union more ancient than intellectual energy, and prior to energy. And soul considers the variety of intellect and the splendour of forms as nothing with respect to that transcendency of *The Good* by which it surpasses the whole of things. And it dismisses indeed intellectual perception, running back to its own hyparxis; but it always pursues, investigates, and aspires after *The Good*, hastens as it were to embosom it, and gives itself to this alone among all things without hesitation. But why is it necessary to speak of the soul? For these mortal animals, as Diotima somewhere says, despise all other things, and even life itself and being, through a desire of the nature of *The Good;* and all things have this one immoveable and ineffable tendency to *The Good;* but they overlook, consider as secondary, and despise the order of every thing else. This, therefore, is the one secure port of all beings.

This also is especially the object of belief to all beings. And through this the conjunction and union with it is denominated faith by theologists, and not by them only, but by Plato likewise, (if I may speak what appears to be to be the case) the alliance of this faith with truth and love is proclaimed in the *Laws*. The multitude therefore are ignorant, that he who has a conception of these things, when discoursing about their contraries, infers the same thing with respect to the deviations from this triad. Plato then clearly asserts in the *Laws* that the lover of falsehood is not to be believed, and that he who is not to be believed is void of friendship. Hence it is necessary that the lover of truth should be worthy of belief, and that he who is worthy of belief should be well adapted to friendship. From these things therefore, we may survey divine truth, faith and love, and comprehend by a reasoning

process their stable communion with each other. If, however, you are willing, prior to these things we will recall to our memory that Plato denominates that virtue fidelity which conciliates those that disagree, and subverts the greatest of wards, I mean seditions in cities. For from these things faith appears to be the cause of union, communion and quiet. And if there is such a power as this in us, it is by a much greater priority in the Gods themselves. For as Plato speaks of a certain divine temperance, justice and science, how is it possible that faith which connectedly comprehends the whole order of the virtues should not subsist with the Gods? In short, there are these three things which replenish divine natures, and which are the sources of plenitude to all the superior genera of beings, *viz.* goodness, wisdom and beauty. And again, there are three things which collect together the natures that are filled, being secondary indeed to the former, but pervading to all the divine orders, and these are faith, truth and love. But all things are saved through these, and are conjoined to their primary causes; some things indeed, through the amatory mania, others through divine philosophy, and others through theurgic power, which is more excellent than all human wisdom, and which comprehends prophetic good, the purifying powers of perfective good, and in short, all such things as are the effects of divine possession. Concerning these things therefore, we may perhaps again speak more opportunely.

CHAPTER XXVI

Again, let us, if you are willing, from other dialogues investigate the common dogmas of Plato about divine natures. Whence therefore, and what dogmas shall we assume, while we proceed in our search according to nature? Are you willing that we should in the next place recall to our memory what is written in the *Phædo*? Socrates therefore says in the demonstrations of the immortality of the soul which are derived from its similitude to divinity, that the essence which is superior to the soul, (and to which the soul is naturally similar, and being similar participates of an immortal allotment) is divine and immortal, intelligible and uniform, indissoluble and possesses an invariable sameness of subsistence; but that the essence which is inferior to the soul, is entirely the contrary, to which also it pertains to be corrupted and to be passive. For a thing of this kind is sensible and multiform, and is dissoluble because it is a composite; and he predicates among these all such things as pertain to a corporeal subsistence. Let us therefore direct our

attention to these common dogmas, and examine after what manner each of them pertains to the Gods.

In the first place then what is that which we look to when we speak of that which is said to be divine? From what has been said therefore, it is evident that every God subsists according to the highest union of beings. For to us ascending from bodies, the Gods have appeared to be superessential unities, the generators, perfectors and measurers of essences, and who bind all first essences to themselves. But that which is divine, is not only hyparxis and *The One* in each order of being, but at the same time is that which participates and that which is participated; of which the latter is a God, but the former is divine. Whether however, prior to the participated unities, there is something which is separate and participated will be evident in what follows. But at present we shall define that which is divine to be a thing of this kind, *viz.* being which participates of *The One*, or *The One* subsisting contractedly together with being. For we assume all things in the Gods except *The One*, as suspended from them and secondary, *viz.* essence, life and intellect. For the Gods do not subsist in, but prior to these, and they produce and contain these in themselves, but are not defined in them. But it is necessary not to be ignorant that these are in reality thus distinguished from each other. In many places, however, Plato magnificently celebrates the participants of the Gods by the same names, and denominates them Gods. For not only the Athenian guest in the *Laws* calls a divine soul a God, but also Socrates in the *Phædrus*. For he says "That all the horses and charioteers of the Gods are good and consist of things good;" and afterwards still more clearly, "and this is the life of the Gods." But this is not yet wonderful. For is it not admirable that he should denominate those beings Gods who are always conjoined with the Gods, and who together with them give completion to one series? For in many places he calls dæmons Gods, though they are essentially posterior to, and subsist about the Gods. For in the *Phædrus* and *Timæus*, and in other dialogues, you will find him extending the appellation of the Gods even as far as to dæmons. But what is still more paradoxical than these things, he does not refuse to call certain men Gods; for in the *Sophista* he thus denominates the Elean guest.

From all that has been said therefore, this must be assumed, that with respect to a God, one thing is simply a God, another according to union, another according to participation, another according to contact, and another according to similitude. For of super-essential natures indeed, each is primarily a God; of intellectual natures, each is a God according to union, and of divine souls, each is God according to participation. But divine dæmons are Gods according to contact with

the Gods; and the souls of men are allotted this appellation through similitude. Each of these however is, as we have said, rather divine than a God. Since the Athenian guest calls intellect itself divine; but that which is divine is posterior to the first deity, in the same manner as that which is united is posterior to *The One* that which is intellectual, to intellect, and that which is animated, to soul. And always those natures that are more uniform and simple have the precedency; but the series of beings ends in *The One Itself.* Let this, therefore, be the definition and distinction of that which is divine.

In the next place, let us survey the immortal. For with Plato there are many orders of immortality, pervading from on high as far as to the last of things; and the last echo, as it were, of immortality, is in those visible natures that are perpetual; which the Elean guest, in his discourse about the circulation of the universe, says, are allotted from the father a renovated immortality. For every body is allotted a being and a life dependent on another cause; but is not itself naturally adapted to connect, or adorn, or preserve itself. The immortality of partial souls is, I think, more manifest and more perfect than this; which Plato evinces by many demonstrations in the *Phædo*, and in the 10th book of the *Republic*. But I mean by the immortality of partial souls, that which has a more principal subsistence, as containing in itself the cause of eternal permanency. We shall not, however, err if prior to both these we establish the immortality of dæmons. For the genera of these through which they subsist are incorruptible, and they neither verge to mortality, nor are filled with the nature of things which are generated and corrupted. But I infer that the immortality of divine souls is still more venerable and essentially more transcendent than that of dæmons; which divine souls we say are primarily self-motive, and are the fountains and principles of the life divided about bodies, and through which bodies obtain a renovated immortality. If, however, prior to these you conceive the Gods themselves, and the immortality in them, and how in the *Banquet* Diotima does not attribute an immortality of this kind even to dæmons, but defines it to subsist in the Gods alone, such an immortality as this will appear to you to be separate, and exempt from the whole of things. For there eternity subsists, which is the fountain of all immortality, and through it all things live and possess life, some things indeed a perpetual life, but others a life dispersed into non-being. In short, therefore, that which is divine is immortal so far as it generates and comprehends in itself a perpetual life. For it is immortal, not as participating of life, but as the supplier of a divine life, and as deifying life itself, whether you are willing to call such a life intelligible, or by any other name.

In the next place let us direct our attention to the intelligible. It is denominated, therefore, in opposition to that which is sensible and which is apprehended by opinion in conjunction with sense. For the intelligible is first unfolded into light in the most principal causes. For soul is indeed intelligible, is of this allotment, is exempt from sensibles, and obtains an essence separated from them. Prior to soul also intellect is intelligible; for we rather think it fit to arrange soul in the middle, than to connumerate it with the first essences. That likewise is denominated intelligible, which is more ancient than intellect, which replenishes intelligence, and is itself by itself perfective of it, and which Timæus arranges prior to the demiurgic intellect and intellectual energy, in the order of a paradigm. But beyond these is the divine intelligible, which is defined according to union itself, and a divine hyparxis. For this is intelligible as the object of desire to intellect, as perfecting and comprehending intellect, and as the plenitude of being. In one way, therefore, we must denominate the intelligible as the hyparxis of the Gods; in another way as true being and the first essence; in another way as intellect and all intellectual life; and in another way as soul and the psychical order. It is likewise necessary not to fashion the different natures of things conformably to names. Such, therefore, is the order of this triad; so that what is divine indeed is unmingled and ranks as the first; that which is immortal is the second; and that which is intelligible the third. For the first of these is deified being; the second is life subsisting according to the immortality of the Gods; and the third is intellect, which is denominated intelligible in consequence of being replete with union.

CHAPTER XXVII

After this, it follows in the next place, that we should consider the uniform, the indissoluble, and that which has an invariable sameness of subsistence, from the same causes, and these as the precursors of, and pervading through all the divine orders. For the uniform, indeed, has the highest subsistence, is present with the divine monad, and appears to be especially adapted to that which is primarily being[†] and in which also every participable genus of unities ends. For *The One* is prior to these, as will be evident as we proceed. But the indissoluble is the second. For it comprehends and binds the extremes according to divine union; since the dissoluble is such as it is through the want of connexion and of a power which collects multitude into one. And that which has an invariable sameness of subsistnce is eternal, and is full of the

[†] For το ον it is necessary to read τῳ οντι.

perpetuity of the Gods; from which also the participation of immortality and eternal sameness is derived to other things. The uniform, therefore, pertains to the same thing as the divine; but the indissoluble to the same thing as the immortal; and that which has an invariable sameness of subsistence we must refer to the intelligible.

And do you not see how these are severally after a manner co-adapted to each other? For the first of these, through the first unity which is participated by being is, as it is fit it should be, uniform. For if a god subsists according to *The One*, that which is divine will doubtless be uniform. But that which through one cause of life is immortal, is also similarly indissoluble. For life is the bond of dissoluble natures; which also Timæus indicating to us, opposes the dissoluble to the immortal: "for you are not immortal, says the demiurgus, yet you shall never be dissolved, nor be subject† to the fatality of death." Every thing mortal, therefore, is dissoluble; but the immortal is indissoluble. That, however, which has a renovated immortality is for the same reason neither indissoluble, nor mortal. For being in the middle of both it is neither of the extremes, according to each opposition. But the third of these being established according to the plenitude of whole intelligibles subsists at once and is invariably the same. For the intelligible is the cause of sameness and of eternal permanency; and intellect through this is entirely eternal. These triads, therefore, proceed from the first and most principal causes, in the same manner as we demonstrated of the before-mentioned triads. But those things, indeed, we shall consider hereafter.

These things, therefore, being discussed, let us direct our attention to the unbegotten in divine natures, and unfold what we assert it to be. For we say that all [true] being is without generation, and Socrates demonstrates in the *Phædrus*, that souls are unbegotten. Prior to these, also, the Gods themselves are established above generations and a subsistence according to time. How, therefore, shall we define the unbegotten when applied to a divine nature, and according to what reason? Is it because divinity is exempt from all generation, not only from that which subsists in the parts of time, such as we assert the generation of material natures to be, nor from that only which is extended into the whole of time, such as Timæus demonstrates the generation of the celestial bodies to be, but also from the psychical generation? Since Timæus denominates this to be unbegotten according to time, but to be the best of generated natures. And in short, a divine nature is exempt from all division and essential separation. For the

† For γενσεσθε read τευξεσθε.

progression of the Gods is always according to a union of secondary natures, which are uniformly established in the natures prior to them, the things producing containing in themselves the things produced. The indivisible, therefore, the unseparated and the united are in reality unbegotten. So that if certain generations of the Gods are spoken of by Plato in fabulous figments, as in the fable of Diotima, the generation of Venus is celebrated, and of Love at the birth of Venus, it is necessary not to be ignorant after what manner things of this kind are asserted, and that they are composed for the sake of symbolical indication; and that fables for the sake of concealment call the ineffable unfolding into light through causes, *generation*. For in the Orphic writings, indeed, the first cause is on this account denominated Time; since again, for another reason, it is thus denominated, in order that a subsistence according to cause may be the same as a subsistence according to time. And the progression of the Gods from the best of causes is properly denominated generation according to time. To Plato, therefore, mythologizing, it is adapted to devise things of this kind conformably to theologists; but when he is discoursing dialectically, and investigating and unfolding divine natures intellectually and not mystically, it is then adapted to him to celebrate the unbegotten essence of the Gods. For the Gods primarily establish in themselves the paradigm of non-generation. But an intellectual nature is in a secondary degree unbegotten, and after this the psychical essence. And in bodies there is an ultimate resemblance of unbegotten power; which some posterior to Plato perceiving, have indefinitely shown that the whole heaven is unbegotten. The Gods, therefore, are unbegotten. But there is an order in them of first, middle, and last progressions, and a transcendency and subjection of powers. There are also in them uniform comprehensions of causes; but multiform progenies of things caused. And all things, indeed, are consubsistent in each other; but the mode of subsistence is various. For some things as replenishing subsist prior to secondary natures; but others, as being filled aspire after more perfect natures, and participating of their power become generative of things posterior to themselves, and perfective of their hyparxis.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Looking to these things, therefore, we may unfold what is said of paternal causes, and of the prolific powers of mothers in fables. For every where, we may suppose that the cause of a more excellent and

more uniform nature is paternal;† but we may say that the cause of a more subordinate and partial nature pre-exists in the order of a mother. For with the Gods a father is analogous to the monad, and the cause of bound; but a mother, to the duad, and to the infinite power which is generative of beings. The paternal cause, however, is with Plato uniform, and is established in a more elevated order than the natures which proceed from it, and subsists prior to its progeny in the allotment of the desirable. Again, the maternal cause has the form of the duad; and at one time presents itself to the view in fables as more excellent than its progeny, but at another time as essentially subordinate to it; as in the *Banquet*, Plato calls Poverty the mother of Love. And this is not only the case in fabulous figments, but also in the philosophic theory of beings, as is evident in the *Timæus*. For there Plato calls being the father, but matter the mother and nurse of generation. The powers, therefore, which are prolific and perfective of secondary natures, and the suppliers of life and causes of separation are mothers, being established above the natures produced by them. But the powers which receive the natures that proceed into light, which multiply their energies, and extend even the subordinate allotment of the progeny, are also themselves called mothers. Again, however, the progeny of such like causes, at one time indeed, proceed according to union from their proper principles, and are filled from both the paternal and maternal cause; but at another time they contain the bond of them, being arranged in the middle, conveying the gifts of the fathers to the maternal bosoms, and converting the receptacles of them to the completions of primary causes. But of the natures which subsist from twofold pre-existing principles, some are assimilated to the paternal cause; and such like genera of Gods are productive, defensive, and comprehensive. For to produce, to contain, and to defend, pertain to the cause of bound. But others are assimilated to the maternal cause, and are prolific, and vivific, and the suppliers of motion, of the multiplication of powers, of variety and progressions. For all these are the progeny of infinity and the first multitude.

CHAPTER XXIX

Thus much therefore may suffice concerning the unbegotten hyparxis of the Gods. It now remains, I think, to speak of divine names. For Socrates in the *Cratylus* thinks fit to unfold in a remarkable degree the rectitude of names in divine natures. And Parmenides indeed, in the

† πατρικον is omitted in the original.

first hypothesis, as he denies of *The One* every thing else that is known, and all knowledge, so likewise he denies of it name and language. But in the second hypothesis, besides all other things he shows that this one may be spoken of and† that it has a name. In short therefore, it must be admitted that the first, most principal and truly divine names are established in the Gods themselves. But it must be said that the second names, which are the imitations of the first, and which subsist intellectually, are of a dæmoniacal allotment. And again, we may say that those names which are the third from the truth, which are logically devised, and which receive the ultimate resemblance of divine natures, are unfolded by scientific men, at one time energizing divinely, and at another intellectually, and generating moving images of their inward spectacles. For as the demiurgic intellect establishes resemblances about matter of the first forms contained in himself, and produces temporal images of things eternal, divisible images of things indivisible, and adumbrated images as it were of true beings, - after the same manner I think the science that is with us representing intellectual production, fabricates resemblances of other things, and also of the Gods themselves, representing that which is void of composition in them, through composition; that which is simple, through variety; and that which is united, through multitude; and thus fashioning names, ultimately exhibits images of divine natures. For it generates every name as if it were a statue of the Gods. And as the theurgic art through certain symbols calls forth the exuberant and unenvying goodness of the Gods into the illumination of artificial statues, thus also the intellectual science of divine concerns, by the compositions and divisions of sounds, unfolds the occult essence of the Gods. Very properly therefore, does Socrates in the *Philebus* say, that on account of his reverence of the Gods, he is agitated with the greatest fear respecting their names. For it is necessary to venerate even the ultimate echoes of the Gods, and venerating these to become established in the first paradigms of them. And thus much concerning divine names,[2] which at present may be sufficient for the purpose of understanding the theology of Plato. For we shall accurately discuss them when we speak of partial powers.

† και is omitted in the original.